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THE HUNTER AND THE DOE.

BY PHIBES CARY.

A lonesome doe, a piteous sight to see,
Straying about a most unfriendly wood,
Was by a hunter found, who tenderly
Sheltered her in his bosom from the cold.

Poor desolate one, she had no other choice;
She gave him love, she could not give him less;
In all the world beside there was no voice
Whose tones for her dropped into tenderness!

And so it came about, that where he strayed
Over the hills, she followed far and wide;
Nor fields of sweetest flowers, nor pleasant shade,
Had any power to lure her from his side.

But he, as light and roving hunters may,
Another season found another mate;
Of her grown weary, pushed her from his way
With careless hand, and left her to her fate.

Now in the dust her head has fallen low,
She hardly cares to lift it up again;
Another who had struck the self-same blow,
Could not have hurt her with so sharp a pain.

Therefore, in silent helplessness she lies,
Crushed utterly with shame, and sore distressed,
Pierced through the heart, and smit between the eyes,
By the same hand that yesterday caressed.

Oh, faithless master of that faithful doe,
Whose life must end in thee where it began;
Oh, tenderest friend, oh, cruellest foe,
That ever creature had, thou art the man!

The Ace of Spades:

OR,

IOLA, THE STREET SWEEPER.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

CHAPTER VIII. BETTER DEATH THAN LOVE.

It was a delightful afternoon; the sun shone warm and pleasant. Broadway was filled with the countless throngs that the pleasant weather had called forth.

At one of the windows of a club-room on Broadway, not far from the Fifth Avenue Hotel, sat two young men gazing out upon the passing multitude.

The two men were dressed in the height of fashion, and were evidently well to do in the world.

"By Jove!" cried the taller of the two, who was elaborately "got up" in a light suit with neck-tie and gloves to match, "who is that pretty girl with the blonde hair and blue eyes in that carriage with the bays?"

The other looked in the direction indicated by the finger of his companion.

"Why, don't you know?"

"No; she's a deuced pretty girl."

"That's a distant relation of Os' Tremaine—a cousin or something of that sort. She's only been in New York about a month."

"A country cousin, eh?"

"No, not exactly; she's been to some boarding-school up the river somewhere. She's only about seventeen."

"By Jove! I should like an introduction," cried the tall one, who was called Rodman Cherring.

"I can get you one; you know I'm quite intimate with Oswald Tremaine," said his companion.

"What's her name?"

"Essie Troy."

"Deuced pretty name too."

"Yes; I say, Rod, you're not smitten at first sight, are you?" laughingly asked his companion.

"Well, I don't exactly know," he languidly replied. "I'm very partial to pretty girls."

"Well, it's natural," said the other.

"Who is that gentleman with her?"

"That's Tremaine's *pere*, Oswald's governor. He's been in Europe for some years. He returned about a month ago."

"He hardly looks old enough to be Oswald's father."

"Yes, he's very well preserved," replied his companion.

Leaving the two young gentlemen gazing out of the window, we will follow Tremaine to his home in Fifth avenue.

Loyal Tremaine has not changed greatly in sixteen years. He has grown a little stouter in form and a little fuller in the face, which has also lost its youthful look, for Loyal Tremaine is now a man of forty-one.

With him seated in the parlor is Oswald, his son, a young man of twenty; for Tremaine had been married young, and his wife had died in giving birth to Oswald, a year after her marriage. Essie Troy, the girl that Tremaine had taken under his protection, was also in the room.

Oswald strongly resembled his father, although he had the dark-brown eyes and hair of his mother.

Essie, who was a girl of seventeen, was very pretty, in person a little below the medium height of women. In face a blonde, with silken, golden-haired curls clustering thickly around her dainty head. Her eyes were blue; large, lustrous, glorious eyes they were too.

Oswald, who had never heard of his relative until his father brought her home a month before, was charmed with Essie. Living in the same house, always together, Oswald in the one short month had learned to love her. It was the first love of his life; and how sweet the first love is, the dream of youth which rarely becomes a reality.

Essie, too, seemed happy in the society of Oswald, and the youth had a fond hope that his passion might be returned by the fair girl whom he loved with that ardor that youth alone is capable of.

Tremaine little dreamed of the passion of his son—a passion the knowledge of which would have filled his heart with agony. Man of the world as he was, he did not think of the danger of bringing two fresh hearts together; of the folly of throwing them in

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THEN THE LIGHT OF A CANDLE ILLUMINATED THE ROOM.

close contact with each other, and yet expecting them not to yield to that love which is the basis of all hearts. It is in our nature to love; when we curb that love we curb nature—we destroy the holiest instinct of our being. But man is often blind. Tremaine was in this instance; he would be fortunate if his eyes were not painfully opened.

"Father, here's Doctor Dornton," said Oswald, as he caught a glimpse of that gentleman ascending the steps.

Tremaine rose, and telling the servant to show the doctor into his library, retired there, leaving Oswald and Essie alone in the parlor.

In the library Tremaine was soon joined by the doctor, who was a brisk-looking little man, full of life and spirits.

"Good-day, Tremaine," cried the doctor, in his usual curt, impulsive way, "I've found your secretary for you; just the man for you."

"Indeed! well, I'm glad to hear it, doctor," replied Tremaine, "for my papers need regulating. What is he like?"

"He's not a young man—indeed, I may say that he's an old man, probably about fifty-five or sixty; but in full possession of all his faculties. Quiet, careful and able. Just the man you want to look after your affairs, attend to your leases, etc. A man you can trust."

"That's a good recommendation," observed Tremaine.

"Yes, I should say so, in these days of embezzlement and fraud. Ah! Mr. Tremaine, do you know I sometimes rejoice that I'm not a rich man? Blessed are they that have nothing—for they can't lose it, and the doctor laughed, a merry, cheerful little laugh.

"What is this gentleman's name?"

"Well, upon my life, I can't remember; but I've such a memory for names, you know. Never could keep one in my head longer than ten minutes. But the gentleman has the best of recommendations; he has been with Doctor Brown of Twenty-third street nearly ten years. The doctor has just given up practice, retired, and of course no longer needs a secretary. The doctor spoke to me about recommending the gentleman to any of my acquaintances that might be in need of such a person. I thought of you in an instant, as I knew you wanted a secretary and confidential man of business. So I told the doctor that I would speak to you about it at once."

"It seems to me from your description," said Tremaine, "that this person will suit me exactly."

"That's just what I thought when the doctor spoke to me about him. There, I said to myself, 'is the very man to suit my friend Tremaine!' This gentleman, by the way, I fancy, from what the doctor told me, is a man who has seen better days; you understand, a reduced gentleman."

"Yes; I wish you would tell the doctor to ask him to step round and see me this evening, if it is not too much trouble."

"No, of course not," cried the impetuous doctor, "it's no trouble for me to oblige a friend. Brown's house is right on my way home, so I'll stop in as I pass and leave a message for this gentleman to call upon you this evening."

"I shall be very much obliged."

"Don't mention it!"

"Won't you have a glass of wine, doctor, before you go?" said Tremaine, as the doctor rose to take his departure. "I have some excellent sherry that I imported myself; I can vouch for its goodness," and Tremaine rung for the servant.

"Well, that's saying a great deal in these days of adulteration," returned the doctor. "I plead guilty to a weakness for a little good wine—for the stomach's sake, you know, Mr. Tremaine," and the doctor laughed at his excuse.

The wine was brought, and the doctor pronounced it excellent.

"By the way," said the doctor, as he leisurely sipped his wine, "I saw Oswald and that pretty young relative of yours on the avenue this afternoon. I couldn't help thinking what a handsome couple they'd make."

This was the first time that the idea had ever been presented to Tremaine's mind and he contracted his brows at the thought.

"They wouldn't make a bad match," continued the doctor.

"I hope such an idea will never enter Oswald's head," said Tremaine, with a grave face.

"Why so?" asked the doctor, in wonder; "a young, pretty, healthy girl, as full of animal spirits as a young kid, and as modest and gentle as a violet. What better wife for your son could you want?"

"I replied Tremaine, "could never make her his wife," gravely replied Tremaine.

"By George! I don't really understand," said the doctor in amazement.

"Doctor, I would rather see my son lying in his grave than know that he entertained a passion for this girl, pure and good as she is!" exclaimed Tremaine, with strange earnestness.

"Well, really, I am puzzled," said the bewildered little doctor.

"Doctor, I love Essie like a daughter, and yet I would rather see her dead than know that she loved my son!" Tremaine's face bore the marks of strong emotion as he pronounced these singular words.

The doctor was bewildered.

"Well, now, really, do you know that I had an idea that you had intended to make a match between the two?" said the doctor.

"No; such a union is impossible; the laws both of heaven and man forbid it," exclaimed Tremaine, pacing the floor in great agitation.

The doctor could not account for this strange emotion.

"I can't really comprehend how that can be!"

Tremaine paused suddenly in front of his guest.

"Doctor, I have said more in my agitation than I have any right to utter. It is a family secret, and you will oblige me by forgetting what I have said. Banish it from your memory as if you had never heard it. Will you do so?"

"Certainly," replied the doctor; "we physicians, you know, are not used to telling tales out of school; if we were, what a precious lot of rows there would be kicked up in some families of my acquaintance."

"I know I can trust you, doctor; and I thank you too for having spoken on the subject. I did not think of the danger that there was in bringing these two young people together."

"Oh, you mustn't mind my nonsense," cried the doctor. "I don't suppose that they care two pins about each other."

"Yes, but there is danger that they may. I am glad that I have thought of this in time," said Tremaine.

In time! The father little guessed that his son was already deeply in love with the gentle Essie, that the seeds of that passion were deeply sown in his heart. The seeds of that passion the father feared more to see than death.

"Oh, I guess, there isn't any danger," and the doctor drained his wine-glass and prepared to depart.

"I hope not," said Tremaine, but in his mind he was strangely uneasy.

"You'll be at home all the evening?"

"Yes."

"Very well; expect your new secretary then, for I know he'll suit you." And the doctor took his departure.

For a few moments Tremaine sat motionless, lost in thought.

"Suppose he already loves her?" he said, aloud; "but no, that is hardly possible. She has been here but a month. I'll watch them closely, and if I see that there is danger, I will remove either one or the other."

And with this determination, Tremaine returned to the parlor.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MAN WITH A DEAD LIFE.

DURING the rest of the afternoon Tremaine watched Oswald and Essie closely, but he could not discover any thing to confirm his suspicions.

After dinner Tremaine retired to the library to await the arrival of the applicant for the secretaryship.

At eight in the evening the servant announced that a gentleman desired to speak with Mr. Tremaine.

Tremaine instantly gave orders to show the stranger up.

In a few moments the servant introduced a most singular-looking man into the library, then withdrew.

Tremaine examined his visitor with curiosity.

In person the stranger was about the same height and build as the New Yorker. His face showed the marks of care and suffering. His hair was as white as the driven snow. Judging from his face one would have said that he was a man of sixty, yet his figure was straight and showed not the stoop of age. He was dressed neatly in black. The strangest thing about the man were his eyes, which were as black as jet, but had a vacant, unearthly look about them; the eyes made the whole face look strange.

"You are the gentleman recommended by Doctor Brown, I presume," said Tremaine.

"Yes, sir," said the stranger, in a full, deep voice, a voice that few would expect to hear from the lips of a man of sixty.

"Be seated," said Tremaine, motioning the stranger to a chair.

"Thank you," and the stranger took the proffered seat; "here are my recommendations, sir," and he handed the gentleman a letter.

"You are called James Whitehead?"

"Yes, sir."

The doctor speaks of you in the highest terms," observed Tremaine, after reading the letter.

"He has been like a father to me, sir," said the stranger.

"Well, Mr. Whitehead, the duties of your position in my household will not be very heavy. The principal thing is to attend to my leased property, collect the rents, attend to repairs, in fine, take the whole charge of it. Of course you will reside with me, and your position in the household will be that of a friend, not a hired servant, and as for salary—"

"Oh, never mind that, sir," said the stranger, quickly. "I am alone in the world—my wants are few."

"It is better to have an understanding," said Tremaine; "the doctor mentions in his letter that your salary with him was five hundred per year; if that sum will suit you with me—"

"Oh, yes, sir," said the stranger.

"Well, then, we'll consider the affair settled, and you can enter upon your duties at once. I see that the doctor states that you have been with him ten years."

"Yes, sir."

"Were you in business before that?"

"No, sir." There was a tinge of sadness in the reply.

"Excuse my questions," exclaimed Tremaine, fearing that he had recalled some melancholy memories to the mind of the

old man. He had taken quite a fancy to the new addition to his household, and then, too, Tremaine was one of those humane men who hate to give pain to any one, even the lowliest.

"Oh, speak freely. You have a right, sir, to ask," said the old man. "It is but natural that you should wish to know the history of the man that you are about to trust with your private affairs."

"I fear, though, that my questions may give you pain."

"No, sir; no questions about my past life can give me pain, for, after going back ten years, my life is a blank," said Mr. Whitehead, slowly.

"A blank?" exclaimed Tremaine, in astonishment.

"Yes, a blank," repeated the stranger.

"I do not understand."

"A dead life, sir."

"Pray explain."

"A very few words will do that, sir. Ten years ago I entered Dr. Brown's office. Where do you suppose the doctor found me?"

"I can not guess," answered Tremaine.

"I looked then just the same as I do now. I have not changed a particle in appearance in ten years."

"Why, that is wonderful!"

"Yes; it is strange, but it is true. Ten years ago I looked just as old as I do now."

"But, where did the doctor meet you?" asked Tremaine.

"In the Lunatic Asylum."

Tremaine started in surprise.

"It is true, sir; that is the place where Doctor Brown first saw me."

"But were you insane?" Tremaine asked.

"Well, not exactly insane; that is, I was not mad. I was *nothing*."

Tremaine's astonishment increased.

"What do you mean?"

"Simply that I was but the shadow of a man. I could walk, eat, sleep and talk, but I was not in possession of my senses," answered the old man.

"That is, you were insane, but not dangerous?"

"Yes, sir. The doctor came often to the asylum, and taking a fancy to me, attempted my cure."

"He succeeded?"

"No, sir."

"Is it possible? But you are now in possession of your senses?"

"By an accident, sir. One night I fell from my bed to the floor, striking my head heavily. In the morning I was found insensible; when I recovered, my insanity was gone."

"What a strange fact!" exclaimed Tremaine.

"Yes, sir; it excited a great deal of attention among all the medical men, but an eminent surgeon from Boston, who came on expressly to examine my case, accounted for it quite reasonably. From an examination of my head he gave it as his opinion that my madness had been occasioned by a fracture of the skull. Consequently the second shock had acted as a counteraction to the first and restored me my reason."

"It is quite a wonderful case," said Tremaine. "And you, yourself, do not know what occasioned your madness?"

"Nothing beyond the surgeon's opinion that it had been brought on by a fracture of the skull."

"And you do not remember ever having met with an accident of that description?"

"No, sir; I can remember nothing beyond the morning when I awoke from my swoon with the doctors around me wondering at my strange recovery."

"And beyond that time your life is a blank?"

"Yes, sir; as I have said, a 'dead life.'"

"Why, this is a most astonishing story."

"Yes, sir. This happened ten years ago. After my recovery I went with Doctor Brown to his office, and have remained with him ever since."

"Then you have no knowledge whatever of your early life?"

"None in the least, sir," answered the old man. "It is as strange to me as if I had never lived it. My present life commenced just ten years ago."

"But had the officials of the asylum no clue as to who or what you was?" asked Tremaine.

"No, sir; I was found in the street wandering about. The officers arrested me; then, after an examination, they discovered my insanity and I was sent to the asylum."

"And no one ever called there to inquire after you?"

"No, sir."

"Then your family and friends—for, of course, you must have had both—probably considered you dead?"

"And so I have been, sir," sadly answered the old man. "Dead to all the world—a 'dead life,' sir."

"But isn't there a possibility that some day you may regain your memory?" asked Tremaine.

"The doctors say not, sir. I have been to a great many, but they are all of the same opinion. They say that my restoration to sense was a wonderful accident, but that there isn't any hope for me to get my lost memory back again. I've often heard men say that they would give a great deal to forget their past lives; now I'd give all I have in the world to remember mine. It's an awful thing, sir, a man at my age without a past."

Tremaine's mind involuntarily went back to certain things that he would rather have forgotten. He saw again a pair of blue eyes looking love on him; two soft, white arms, warm with youthful life, he felt entwined around his neck; the sweet pressure of two fond red lips glued to his! Alas! the blue eyes were closed in death, the soft arms shivered in the tomb, and the red lips turned

to dust. Loyal Tremaine could not repress a sigh as his past came back to his memory.

The old man noticed the sigh.

"I fear I have tired you with my story."

"Oh, no," responded Tremaine, hastily.

"It was nothing but a remembrance that came to my mind. Then all the physicians gave their opinion that you would never recover your lost memory."

"Yes; all except one," said the old man.

"And he gave a contrary opinion?"

"Yes. He was a Boston doctor, a learned and clever man, but greatly given to what his brother physicians called 'isms.' He examined me very carefully; like the other Boston doctor, he said that my madness had been occasioned by a fracture of the skull, and that as a second shock of that part had partially restored me, a third would complete my cure."

"Well, the argument seems a good one. Then, to restore your memory you have only to fracture your skull again?"

"Exactly, sir, but he said he wouldn't recommend me to try the experiment."

"On the principle, I suppose, that it might kill as well as cure?"

"Yes, sir. He also said that there was one other chance for me, and that was to experience some great mental shock; if some striking event of that past life, that I can not remember, were brought suddenly and vividly before my eyes or to my senses, it might produce a cure."

"Yours is a very strange case," said Tremaine, thoughtfully.

"Are you willing to take me into your household, sir, now that you have heard my story?" asked the old man.

"Certainly; and I assure you, sir, that I feel a deep sympathy for your misfortune."

And so James Whitehead, the man with a "dead" life, became the secretary of Loyal Tremaine.

CHAPTER X.

THE DANCE-HOUSE IN WATER STREET.

AND now, reader, we will transport you to a little room on Broadway, situated on the second story of a small brick house, near the corner of Howard street.

It is an elegantly fitted up little apartment that we enter. A handsome carpet covers the floor. Beautiful and chastely-drawn pictures ornament the walls. A cosy bed, covered by a snowy-white counterpane, is in one corner, and a luxuriant lounge is in another. A book-case, well stored with standard poets and novels, fills a third. In a fourth a small rack, holding a double-barreled, stub and twist shot-gun—one made by Mullins of Ann street—a fishing-rod, finished off in German silver—as fine a piece of work as Prichard Brothers ever turned out—a pair of fells and masks, a game-bag, a shot-pouch, a powder-flask, a fishing-creel, and last of all a set of boxing-gloves.

All this varied display showed that the occupant of the room indulged not only in the delights of literature and the fine arts, but also in the manly sports of the field.

And now, having described the "sanctum," let us come to the occupants. There are two, both of whom we know. First, the owner of all these articles, Catterton, the "Marquis," who, seated lazily in a rocking-chair, wrapped in a dressing-gown, is puffing a daintily-carved pipe. Second, Slippery Jim, who is extended at full length upon the lounge in a state of delightful lassitude.

The gas is burning in the apartment, for the shades of night have long since descended upon the busy city.

"I say, Marquis!" cried Jim, suddenly, "do you know 'hi ham' puzzled 'bout one thing?"

"What is that, Jim?" asked Catterton, removing the pipe from his mouth, and puffing out a cloud of blue smoke that curled lazily up in little ringlets on the air.

"By 'ow a gent, as you is, can foller the life you do."

"James, some great mind has said that necessity knows no law."

"That's so, my royal 'nibs!" Slippery Jim was in the habit of using strange phrases.

"We can't always be what we want to, in this life," said Catterton, reflectively; "but I'm going to get out of my way of life as soon as possible. But come, it's getting late; let's be off for Water street."

And Catterton sprang to his feet and commenced to pull off the dressing-gown.

"After the little gal, eh?" said Jim, rising slowly to a sitting position.

"Yes, that's my game," answered the "Marquis."

"Shall we go in these togs?" Jim asked, seeing that the "Marquis" was preparing to disrobe.

"Of course not," replied Catterton.

"We don't want to play the peacock in Water street, or we may get stripped of our finery, and have a knife put into us besides."

"Vich would be very disagreeable," observed Jim, preparing to follow the "Marquis' example.

"We'll put on our old clothes and be a couple of 'longshoremen to-night," said Catterton.

"I s'pose we'll need our six-shooters?"

"Well, we may as well take them; there's no telling what may happen," replied Catterton, busy changing his handsome black suit for a common dark one, while Jim followed his example.

"That's so, my tulip!" answered Jim.

Our two worthies were soon transformed from Broadway dandies into Bowery roughs. It is astonishing what a difference good clothes will make in a man.

"I say," said Jim, "do you s'pose you can find the gal?"

"Well, I can try," laconically replied Catterton.

"Do you s'pose she'll be willin' to go you?"

"I can soon find out."

"That's so!"

"It's likely that she'll jump at any chance to escape the tyranny of that brute, English Bill. I never felt so strong an inclination to strike any one in my life as I had the other night when I had hold of him."

"Hit's a pity you didn't give 'im one fer 'is nob."

"The child restrained me; the little one saved the brute that had beaten her so often. But, come, let's be off."

Catterton turned down the gas, and the two left the apartment, the "Marquis" carefully locking the door behind him.

The two turned down Broadway, went up Canal street to the Bowery, down the Bowery, crossed Chatham Square, turned into James street, and then into Water.

And, reader, if you want to see human life packed into houses by the square inch, just take the route that I have described any clear summer night, and before you get through James street to Water you will be gratified. You will behold a sight not to be seen in any other city in the United States; the "North-end," Boston, perhaps comes nearest to it.

Through the crowd of drunken sailors, swearing and abandoned women, ragged and dirty children of all years and sizes, itinerant vendors bawling forth their wares in the husky voices so peculiar to the New York street peddler, the "Marquis" and Jim made their way.

"What do you think of this, Jim?" asked Catterton.

"Vell, we can beat hit over the water, but not much. But that feller cryin' 'istern ain't nowhere 'side of a London costermonger; an' then you don't 'ave no denkeys 'ere to draw the carts, yer know."

"Oh, yes, we have a few," answered the "Marquis"; but here's 300, so 314 can't be far off."

"There hit is ahead. It's a dance-house; don't you see the red light?" said Jim, pointing.

"The signal of danger, but it don't keep 'poor Jack' off the rocks."

"Ow will you find the gal?"

"Ask one of the boys around the neighborhood."

By this time the two had reached the door of the dance-house, which was one of the lowest of its class; a den of thieves, who first drugged their victims with bad liquor, then robbed them of their money.

By the side of the building in which the dance-house was situated, was a small alleyway. This, Catterton conjectured, led to the house in the rear in which the street-sweeper lived.

The "Marquis" hailed a boy that was passing.

"I say, bub—"

"Who are you callin' bub, say?" answered the boy, indignantly.

"Don't you know a gent when you see him, shang-hai?"

"I apologize," said the "Marquis," in his most polished manner; "here's a quarter for you," which the boy pocketed instantly.

"Can you tell me if there is a gal lives in the rear here who sweeps a crossing near the Herald office?"

"English Bill's gal?"

"Yes."

"She lives right in back of 'ere. Do you mean?"

"Catterton saw that this was an abbreviation of Lola.

"Yes, that's the girl I mean, Mr.—"

"Shorty, that's my handle. I sell papers, I does, an' I'm a bully boy with a tin ear!" said the youth, proudly.

This was too much for Jim's nerves and he laughed outright in the boy's face, which made that individual dance round with rage like a bantam rooster.

"Say, you don't want to do that ag'in or I'll haul off an' bust you. I travels on my muscle, I does," exclaimed the pugnacious newsboy.

"I couldn't 'elp it, 'pon my 'onor," said Jim, with a polite bow.

"Well, that's all right," said the appeased Shorty, "cos I don't 'low nobody to grin at me. I'm a red-hot rooster, I am."

What other sort of birds or bipeds this good specimen of a New York newsboy would have claimed to be, we know not; but the "Marquis" interrupted him with a question.

"Will you go in and tell this girl that a gentleman wishes to see her? say the gentleman who gave her his card on Broadway last night. If you'll go I'll give you another quarter."

"Why, you're a stick-in-the-mud on wheels, you are!" exclaimed the boy. This was evidently intended to be used in a complimentary sense. "Will I go? you kin bet your pile on it every time. Just you wait in the saloon an' I'll go an' tell 'er. Say, just look at me slide off on my left ear!" and with this parting request the newsboy disappeared in the darkness of the alley.

"Got any thing to beat that in London?" asked Catterton, referring to the boy.

"No; that kid is a 'ead of my time," replied Jim; "but I say, let's go in an' see what the place is like inside while we are a-waitin'." It looks a blasted sight vorse than 'our 'coal-oles' at home, an' them an' the 'cider-cellars' are bad enough in the way of drinkin' places."

"Yes, we might as well see the sights."

So the two entered the dance-house.

The place was pretty well filled with half-drunken roughs, wholly-drunken sailors, and the degraded women usually to be found in the Water street dance-houses.

After surveying the motley, disgusting scene, Jim, in a whisper, suggested that they had better call for something to drink at the bar, for suspicious eyes were already beginning to glare upon the two strangers.

"Don't drink any thing but beer then; the liquor here is poison," replied Catterton to the suggestion.

So the two made their way to the bar and called for beer. As they were drinking, a man stuck his head in through the door of the saloon and took a hasty glance around. When his eyes fell upon the "Marquis" and his companion he started, and then after a second glance, as if to assure himself, he disappeared. Jim, turning at the same moment, caught sight of the stranger's face. Catterton had not noticed him.

"My hies!" cried Jim, in a whisper, catching the "Marquis" by the arm. "English Bill's just put 'is 'ead in the door."

"The dence he did!" replied Catterton, in the same low, guarded tone that the information had been conveyed in. "Did he see us?"

"Yes."

"Recognized us?"

"I think he did."

"That's ugly!" and the "Marquis," despite his coolness, could not help feeling uneasy.

"We had better get hout," suggested Jim.

"Yes," replied Catterton; "if he attacks us we are at a disadvantage."

"Just so," said Jim; "hand 'e'll probably 'ave a crowd with him."

"Yes, he's on his own dung-hill now. We'll move off quietly so as not to excite attention."

And the "Marquis" and Jim quietly made their way to the door. On opening it, to their dismay they found that the passage-way to the street was filled with a crowd of roughs that were not there when they entered. Jim let the door swing to again quickly.

"Marquis, we're trapped!" and Jim gave vent to a low whistle.

"Well, it looks like it," replied Catterton.

There was no use in denying the truth; their situation, if not one of deadly peril, yet was dangerous.

"Are you made your will, 'Marquis'?" asked Jim, with a grim attempt at pleasantry.

"No, not yet, nor I don't intend to at present. I'm worth a dozen dead men yet," said the "Marquis," coolly.

"Notink like pluck!" observed Jim.

"There's a door at the further end of the saloon; it probably leads into the yard. Come, we'll move quietly to it. It may be open; if so, we're saved."

Carelessly, so as not to excite attention, the two walked through the crowd and reached the door; they tried it.

It was securely fastened.

English Bill, at the head of a dozen or so roughs, entered the saloon.

For the first time in his life, "Dan, the Devil," the fearless "Marquis," turned pale.

Death stared him in the face.

A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE.

ENGLISH BILL and his gang, sauntering slowly through the saloon, approached the end of the room where the "Marquis" and Jim stood like wolves at bay.

The pouring in of the roughs excited no particular attention, for as yet they had not made any hostile demonstration, but slowly and surely they were closing in upon the two who stood by the fastened door.

Quickly the "Marquis" ran his eye over the throng. A tougher set of desperadoes his eyes had never rested upon.

Penned in a corner as the two were, with the ruffians between them and the door of the saloon, escape was not to be thought of save by fighting their way through the crowd, and with the odds against them—six to one—the attempt was hopeless.

"Hour six-shooters vill 'ave to come in to play 'ere," said Jim, quietly to Catterton, as the ruffians were slowly advancing.

"No, no!" replied Catterton, hastily, "don't draw your weapon; they are armed as well as we. We should only be murdered outright. Let us trust to a desperate rush and our knuckles to fight our way through them, if fight we must."

"Vell, it looks like it," said Jim. "My hies!" he suddenly cried, in astonishment, "hif there ain't that little imp of a newsboy."

Jim's eyes did not deceive him, for, stealing along one side of the saloon, just behind the roughs, was the redoubtable Shorty. He was evidently in search of a good position to view the coming struggle.

This position he found on a pile of barrels in a corner of the room near the gas-meter.

"The young imp must have delivered my message to Bill instead of to the girl," said the "Marquis."

"The young devil!" growled Jim; "hif I get hout of this alive, I'll wring his neck when I catches him."

"The chances are against us," said the "Marquis," "but while there's life there's hope."

"That's so, never 'oller!" replied Jim, cheerfully.

English Bill stopped about five feet from

the two; a leer of triumph was upon his ugly face.

"I think I've seen you two before somewhere, hain't I?" he asked, with a grin.

"It is probable," replied the "Marquis."

"I told you that if you traveled round Water street, you had better keep your eyes open. It was your turn the other night, now it's mine."

"What are you going to do?" asked Catterton, more for the sake of gaining time, in hopes that some chance of escape might spring up, than for information.

"I'm going to spoil that pretty face of yours. I'll put such a mark on ye that your own brother won't know you!" cried the ruffian, fiercely.

"Take care you don't get marked yourself in the operation!" returned the "Marquis," his face growing deadly pale—a sure sign in him of rising anger—and his eyes flashing, lurid fires.

"Well, if I can't do it myself, I've got plenty here to help me," and the rough waved his hand to the crowd behind him.

"You are a brave fellow," said the "Marquis," with bitter sarcasm.

"You'll be a beaten feller before you're ten minutes older!" cried Bill, in anger.

"Don't be too sure of that," said Catterton, coolly, although in his heart he had little hope of escape. He knew a miracle alone could save him.

"I am sure of it. I'll make you repent the minute when you first put your hands on me," exclaimed Bill, in anger.

Catterton saw no mercy in the brutal faces and frowning eyes that surrounded him. Firmly he shut his teeth together, compressed his lips, and nerved each muscle in his body for the terrible encounter.

Shorty, the newsboy, perched on the barrels, and leaning on the gas-meter, watched the scene with eager eyes.

"Ready, Jim?" asked Catterton, in an undertone.

"Ready but not willin'," replied the plucky little Englishman.

"Are you going to stand out of my way and let me leave this place unmolested?" demanded the "Marquis."

"No, you don't leave this place on two legs; when you go, you'll be carried out," answered the rough, ferociously.

"For the last time I ask you to let me go in peace."

"No, not if you were to pay me your weight in gold!" returned Bill, savagely.

"Then the consequences be on your own head!" cried the "Marquis," through his clenched teeth.

"Go for 'em boys!" howled Bill.

Suddenly the saloon was plunged in utter darkness—some one had turned off the gas.

"Hold on! don't any one move!" shouted Bill, fearful that his prey might escape him in the darkness; but as he and his roughs encircled the strangers, save where the two walls penned them in, escape was not likely.

The crowd kept their position in obedience to the orders of their leader.

Bill expected that the "Marquis" and Jim would attempt to break through the line, and escape in the darkness, but no such attempt was made.

In a moment the gas was turned on and the saloon again illuminated.

The "Marquis" and Jim had disappeared!

Bill could hardly believe his eyes; there was the door against which the two men had stood, but where were the men?

With a howl of rage the ruffian rushed to the door. His thought was that the door was unlocked and that the two, profiting by the cover of the darkness, had escaped through it.

But English Bill, dashing himself against the door, found it securely fastened.

The ruffians were astonished.

With blank countenances they gazed upon each other.

"Some one of you fellows let 'em pass!" cried Bill, in a rage.

Each and all indignantly denied the soft impeachment.

"Where the blazes did they go to?" growled Bill, sorely vexed at the escape of the men that he had marked out as his victims.

"And who turned off the gas?" asked one of the ruffians.

"Yes, that is what I'd like to know!" cried Bill.

But there was no one to answer that question.

The newsboy, Shorty, perched upon the pile of barrels, had not been noticed by any of the gang, so intent were they upon their prey, and now he had disappeared.

"They must have got out into the street somehow," cried Bill, almost wild with rage.

"Come, fellows!"

The roughs rushed quickly out into the street, but no trace could they find of the two that had so mysteriously disappeared from the dance-house.

English Bill was puzzled beyond expression.

"If I hadn't a-felt him, and knowed that he was a man, I swear I should think he was the devil himself," said the bewildered ruffian.

Just then Shorty, the newsboy, came down out of the alley.

The idea suddenly occurred to Bill that perhaps the two might have taken refuge there.

"Say, Shorty?" cried Bill.

"What is it?" demanded the newsboy.

"Have you seen a couple of strangers about here?" asked Bill.

"Young fellers?"

"Yes," cried Bill, eagerly.

"Dark clothes?"

"Yes, yes!" The ruffians advanced eagerly and surrounded Shorty.

"Gents?"

"Yes, yes!" chorused half a dozen voices.

The roughs began to think they had struck the track again.

"Good-lookin' gents?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Well, I hain't seen 'em!" said Shorty, with a grin.

"Oh!"

Bill made a blow at Shorty, which the boy dexterously avoided, and off he ran up the alley, as fast as his legs would carry him.

English Bill was beaten, but unwilling to give up the chase, with his crowd he started up the street, thinking that, perhaps, accidentally, he might stumble upon the two who had escaped from his clutches in such a mysterious manner.

And what did become of the "Marquis" and his companion? how had they escaped from their terrible peril?

We will explain.

When the gas was so suddenly extinguished, the two were about to improve the opportunity offered them by the darkness and spring upon their foes, when the door behind them was suddenly opened, and they, taking advantage of the avenue of escape, quickly passed through it. Then the door was closed and bolted. All this had taken but a moment, and in the confusion and noise attending the unexpected advent of the darkness had not been noticed by the fellows who formed the cordon around the two men.

In the darkness of the yard a small, soft hand grasped that of the "Marquis."

"Give the other gentleman your other hand and follow me," said a low, sweet voice.

The "Marquis" obeyed the instructions.

Through the darkness, led on by the small hand of the unknown, who had come so timely to his rescue, Catterton went.

They passed across the yard, up a flight of rickety wooden steps into a house and through a long, narrow passage; then ascended a flight of stairs—worn into ugly holes, here and there, perfect man-traps—and then they passed before a door. The guide inserted a key into the lock—the door opened; but the room within was as dark as the entry-way.

"Come in," said the voice.

The small hand had released its hold of Catterton's palm to unlock the door.

TOM BLAKE.

BY SARA COTTEW.

When summer-clouds sail o'er the prairie,
Like shadows that dance in their wake,
Though I try to be wise and wary,
My thoughts are pursuing Tom Blake.

They tell me, "he's not worth a penny,"
That "to love him is quite a mistake;"
I know as to wealth, if I'd any,
I'd freely divide with Tom Blake.

But wealth can be gathered forever,
It lies on the land and the lake;
But, if they compel us to sever,
There's never another Tom Blake.

I care not though others may scorn him,
I'd frown on them all for his sake,
For the Grace combine to adorn him—
Love lies in the glance of Tom Blake.

The passion now having my bosom
As wild as the winds on the lake,
And still they cry, "Fanny refuse him,"
When who could I love but Tom Blake?

Alas! for the fate of poor woman!
Alas! for the steps she may take!
My heart, with a love that is human,
Devotedly clings to Tom Blake.

Sometimes we wed to our sorrow,
And sometimes we wed through mistake;
But, if he should kill me to-morrow,
To-day I would marry Tom Blake!

My Rival's Revenge.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

Honor hath her laws; there is excess
In all revenge, that goes with less.
—JOHN BUCKER'S ALABAMA.

Did I ever tell it to you?
No.

Well, then, I'll begin at once:
My name is Morgan Grenoble, and to-day
I have reached the turning-point of my thirtieth year.

People say that I look "odd,"
With almost snow-white hair, and wonder
how it came thus to one so young. They do
not know the story I am about to tell,
for I have not long been a resident of this
little Occidental town.

Eight years ago, come the twenty-ninth
of this very March, I stood at the hymeneal
altar with Laura Comstock. It was in
Stockton, now quite a city in the heart of
a great State. I was a telegraph-operator,
and was stationed at Wayburgh, a station
twenty miles from Stockton, and at the ter-
minations of the then D. C. and C. R. R.

Returning from our honeymoon, I left my
wife in Stockton, and proceeded to Way-
burgh, intending to remain at my old post
until relieved, which I thought would be in
a few days, as my offered resignation had
been accepted at headquarters. I would
have remained at Wayburgh, if a dwelling
could have been procured.

The engineer on the "up" train was
Mark Moore, a rather handsome young fel-
low, who had been my rival for the hand of
the woman I called my wife. He was
piqued at my success, and it was at Laura's
request that he was present at our wedding.
She thought a "good deal" of Mark, for he
was a fine fellow; but there was one thing
against him; he was very passionate.

When the train stopped at Moreland's, I
alighted from the passenger-coach and walk-
ed forward to the engine. Mark was busily
engaged oiling the machinery.

"How are you, Morgan?" he said, as he
espied me, and held out his hand.

His disappointment seemed to have left
him, and he was very pleasant.

I told him that my health was never bet-
ter.

"Going to Wayburgh?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered, "fifty-four miles."

"One hardly notices the ascent," he went
on, "but the descent is an entirely different
thing. I was thinking, Morgan, what a
terrible thing it would be if an engine, with
full power on, were to become unmanage-
able at the top of the grade, and dash
away."

I shuddered.

"And if a man bent on revenge were to
place a fellow-creature bound on the engine,
what a terrible death he would hasten to,
with almost lightning rapidity."

Again an icy chill went to my heart at
his words, and I said:

"Suppose the engine should encounter
the C— passenger?"

"Then death would spread his wings
over the spot of the collision."

I had no desire to pursue the conversa-
tion further; but he persisted in it, and I
was greatly relieved when the train ran into
Wayburgh.

The following night was dark and tem-
pestuous, and I alone occupied the dépot,
watching the little machine before me. As
I have said, Wayburgh was situated at the
terminus of the road, and, as yet,
being a station, but few passengers came
and went. That day a new engine arrived,
and Mark Moore was put in charge of it.

From two o'clock in the afternoon to five,
I saw him moving about the engine. Until
ten I watched the little machine. Then
Mark opened the door and stepped into the
small apartment.

"Are you receiving a dispatch, Morgan?"
he asked.

"No, Mark; why do you ask?"

"Because, if you are not, I wish you
would leave the clicker a bit, come out and
look at my Red Bird by lantern light."

"Had I not better wait till morning?" I
quietly asked.

"No," she looks prettier at night—with
steam up."

"With steam up!" I said, not a little
astonished. "What for?"

"I'm going to take a little trial-trip," he
smiled. "I'm going to run down-grade to
Chalmers, reverse the engine and run back.
The train will not be due here for an hour,
and I can go to Chalmers and return within
twenty minutes."

"But will not the authorities grumble?"

"Let them, and be hanged. I'm going
to Chalmers. Are you not going to come
out and see me off?"

"To be sure, Mark," I said, rising and
putting on my great-coat.

We walked out and into the great tem-
porary shed where the new and beautiful
engine stood, ready to run off at the com-
mand of its master. By the lantern I saw
that it was a model piece of mechanism,
and in a short time I had mastered the
whys and wherefores of the multitudinous
parts of its machinery.

"You see," said Mark Moore, "I have at-
tached only the tender. I will go down to
Chalmers like the lightning, and come back
like a bullet. Can you not accompany me,
Morg?"

"I dare not, be so long absent from my
post at this hour, Mark," I answered. "Were
I to accompany you, I might leave Way-
burgh under censure."

"Pooh, man, no danger. But you must
go with me."

He stepped nearer to me, and his whisky-
laden breath assailed my olfactorys. I was
surprised, for never before had I seen him
under the influence of liquor.

"But I can not, Mark," I answered calm-
ly, yet in a tone calculated to soothe the
passion I thought was rising.

He put his lantern on the ground, and
then sprang erect.

"You shall, Morg Grenoble," he cried,
and before I could answer him, he dashed
me to the earth, and planted his knees on
my breast.

"Not a word out of you, Morg," he said,
fiercely, producing a rope. "I'll tell you
what I'm going to do. You know we were
discussing the consequences attending the
rush of a maddened engine down the grade.
I guess I won't go to Chalmers, but will
send you clear to the bottom of the grade."

"Mark Moore, you are mad!" I said.

"Would you murder me in cold blood, and
others who are coming up on the 11:10 pas-
senger?"

"Yes," he said, coldly.

"Think of the woman you would make
a widow. I went on, picturing my sweet
wife in Stockton. Think of Laura! Do not
cast a cloud over the bright sun of her
existence. Spare me for her sake, Mark, and
she will bless you."

"No, Morg Grenoble, I'm going to send
you on a ride to death. It will be a deli-
cious ride, too, for it is down the grade. You
got Laura Comstock, and I didn't. I'm
going to have my revenge now."

During our conversation he busied him-
self in tying my hands and feet, and as he
finished his last sentence, I was securely
bound. I might have resisted, but resistance
would have availed me nothing, for I was
constitutionally weak, while he was a lion.

"Now for the ride to death," he cried,
lifting me up and bearing me into the little
engine-room.

The night being so inclement, no one was
stirring around the dépot, and I could not
even hope for assistance.

Again, when he was securing me to the
rod on the engine, I pleaded for mercy; but
as well might I have pleaded to stones, for he
met my prayers with taunts.

"What will it profit you, Mark?" I asked,
"to wreak your vengeance on me? The
hounds of justice will run you to earth, and
you will suffer for your crime."

"What care I? I'll take my chance."

"To hell, allegiance vows, to the blackest devil!"
Conscience and grace to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation; to this point I stand—
That both the worlds I give to negligence;
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged."

I spoke no more, for I knew he would
not retract his steps, and I watched him
toss the wood into the glowing furnace.

"Nebuchadnezzar heated his furnace seven
times hotter, so will I heat mine," he
said, in a low voice, as he tossed the wood
in.

"There!" he said, at last, as he closed
the furnace door. "Every thing is ready
for your ride. You'll go right through
Stockton; but I guess you won't have time
to stop to speak to loving Laura. Good-by,
Morg; write when you get to the foot of
the grade."

The engine was moving, and he leaped
off.

"May God have mercy on your soul,
Mark Moore," I shouted after him.

I heard a devilish cackling pass his
lips, and then sunk back with a despairing
groan.

The grade between Wayburgh and Chal-
mers was quite steep, and before I reached
the little town, the speed of the "Red Bird"
and its tender seemed to rival that of the
electric telegraph.

On, on—faster, faster! The towns, with
their glimmering lights, appeared and were
gone in a flash. I knew we would soon be
in Stockton.

The manner in which I was bound per-
mitted me to look out of the window. I
did so, and Stockton, the home of my wife,
greeted me with its many lights.

Ahead, I saw many people standing in
front of the dépot, waiting for the 11:10 pas-
senger. The next moment I was carried
past them. I saw their astonished faces,
and heard a piercing shriek. I recognized

the voice as my wife's. I sunk back un-
nerved, and half-unconscious, I was borne
on.

Suddenly I roused myself.

In a short time I would meet the south-
ern train, and then— I shuddered at the
horrid thought. There was one hope for
me—just one. Perhaps the operator had
telegraphed down the grade, and thus warn-
ed, the coming train would switch, and save
its passengers from death.

Still on, on, as fast as ever, and at last
I heard the rush of waters. The next
moment I was crossing the Muskaton; the
next, I was flying through the suburbs of
Dalton.

Looking out, I saw, far ahead, the glaring
headlight of the southern train. To me it
looked as though it stood on my track. I
sunk back and gave myself up for lost.
Evidently the train had not been warned.

On, on! I closed my eyes and murmur-
ed the last prayer I expected to utter in this
world of vengeful rivals.

Suddenly I heard a man shout, "Stand
back!" and then crash! crash!—all was
dark.

"Is he injured much?" somebody asked.
I opened my eyes—on earth? Yes, thank
God.

Sympathizing faces bent over me, and a
surgeon was examining my wounds.

"The ties stopped the engine," said the
surgeon. "We received a telegram from
Stockton informing us that the new engine
was rushing heedlessly down the grade.
The southern train was switched off upon
its arrival here, and we set to work to pile
innumerable ties on the track, which, thank
God, checked your mad career."

"Telegraph to Stockton," I said, "to my
wife."

"But my wife had not recovered from her
swoon," she had recognized my pale face,
as I dashed past, and fainted.

It seemed as though every bone in my
body was broken, and I can not tell how I
ever survived through the prostration that
followed.

But I did, to find my hair rival-
ing the spotless purity of the snow, and
crowded on my youthful forehead.

A sheriff accompanied the southern train
to Wayburgh, and arrested my rival. He
was never tried, for the third day following
his arrest he was conveyed to the asylum, a
harmless, hopeless maniac.

I have told you the story, and, much re-
lieved, I lay aside the pen.

Hand, Not Heart.

THE DOUBLE BETROTHAL.

BY LENOX WILDER.

CHAPTER XXXI.—CONTINUED.

The writing, which stood out so plainly,
and at which all stared, read thus:

"I am displeased at Agnes and her wilful con-
duct, and such conduct. Can I forget it? Never,
so help me Heaven! She disobeyed me in a slight
command. Would she not have done the same,
whenever that command had been? St. Clair, my
brother, as usually, shall he have my property,
allowing, as he may see fit, something to my wilful
daughter! Yes, this seems good; and yet, Agnes,
Agnes! she is my daughter! No—no! by heavens!
I'll not dishonor her! It would be monstrous.
She shall not remember with fear and hate her still
loving father."

JOHN ARLINGTON.

The room was instantly in confusion, and
cries resounded, high and threatening. And
then again the voice of the showman, ring-
ing clear and stern above the din, was heard:

"Now, friends, gaze on the tableau, and
watch the door!"

Instantly the room was aglow with flash-
ing lights, suddenly lit, and then the green
curtain was hurled aside.

A ghastly picture was presented. Within
a glass case, the light streaming full upon it,
were the withered remains of a dead man—a
knife sticking in his breast!

To one side of this stood a large chest,
opened, gold in heaps and massive plate were
glittering within it. On top, in large letters,
on a piece of pasteboard, the words, JOHN ARLING-
TON'S FORTUNE!

With another wild cry, St. Clair Arlington
turned, and avoiding the door, which he
now knew to be guarded, he dashed through
the window, carrying sash and all with him.
He was instantly followed by Delaney Howe.

Some of the sheriffs, who were in the
room in disguise, sprang through the door,
and darted in pursuit. But all trace was
quickly lost, though they did not give up
the chase.

It was now between eleven and twelve
o'clock, and the moon was shining brilli-
antly down.

A man crept along the plain glancing
about him in every direction. Suddenly he
paused. Not twenty yards from him was the
dark Shadow! The man trembled, and
turned as if to fly. But at that moment,
pale and dim before him, rose a white figure,
standing facing the Shadow. It was waving
its arms sadly to and fro, and the Shadow
made the same movement.

The man looked steadily at the figure; he
slowly drew a pistol, cocked it, and mutter-
ed:

"Be you man, devil or ghost, I'll try
you!"

As he spoke he quickly extended his arm,
and pulled the trigger of the deadly weapon.
A faint flash of light illumined the gloom,
then a sharp report rang out; then a long,
low wail pealed on the night-air, and the
white figure, flinging up its arms, reeled
away.

"My God! my God! what have I done!"
exclaimed the man, in an agonized voice.

"That voice—that voice! Ha! well met,
St. Clair Arlington!" he suddenly cried, as a
man rushed by him, "you brought me to
this—you have ruined me—you have dyed
my hands in blood—and the reckoning hour
has come!"

"Back! back, Delaney Howe! I am mad!
And—" he could say no more, for, at that
moment, the other sprang upon him.

Then ensued a desperate struggle, but St.
Clair Arlington was no match for the fren-
zied man who clutched him.

Back, back, Delaney Howe pressed him;
and, at length, the struggling men stood on
the verge of the dreadful pit, which had so
long held its dark secret.

A moment more and a bright blade flash-
ed in the air, then it descended, driven by the
full force of Delaney Howe's arm, and St.
Clair Arlington, with a gurgling groan, fell
backward, lifeless, into the dark hole.

Delaney Howe paused not, but dashed
along. On he fled. He looked not behind
him, and then he stood in the dark woods.
He plunged in heedless of briars and ob-
structions. In ten minutes he stood at the
entrance of the cave; then he entered. He
knew the passage and he groped his way on.
At length he reached the door; in a moment
he had opened it, and entered. He paused;
he heard the sound of heavy breathing as of
men sleeping. A grim smile crept over his
face. Quietly he stole in, and felt around
him. He soon found what he was seeking;
it was a bag, and it sent forth a metallic
ring, as he handled it.

"He turned at once, and, setting a heavy
spring on the outside, he cautiously removed
the key from the lock, sprung outside, and,
hurling the door to, he hurried away."

"He cared not for the low cries that rung
after him. He was fleeing, and time was
precious to him."

"The door at the mansion was suddenly
hurled open, and a white-faced woman—
her hair disheveled, her dress torn, her eyes
staring wildly, her limbs failing beneath her,
fell into the hall, her feet scattering the
flowers."

"For God's sake! Come!—Dora—is dy-
ing!" and she sunk in a swoon.

And Delaney Howe, now undisguised, stood
there. By his side was the long-missing
old man, crazy Noon—the servant of old
John Arlington.

Both of them heard the words which Ag-
nes had spoken: "Remember with fear and hate
her still loving father!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

ANGELS' WINGS.

A STRANGE and terrible scene was that
presented one hour after the events as oc-
curring in the last chapter.

The time midnight; the place, the humble
home of the widow Howe.

Reclining in a chair, her face pale as the
whitest marble, her soft eyes, fading and al-
most listless, raised on high, her spotless
garments bathed in a ruby tide of her life's
blood, welling from her side, sat Dora Howe.

Her left hand was clutched tight in that of
Clavis Warne, who, with agonized face, tear-
dimmed eye, and bursting heart, knelt by her
side, his knees on the floor.

The kind-hearted physician of the village
held her right hand—his sensitive finger on
the flickering pulse, flashing swiftly away.

The man of science had done all that lay
in the power of earthly remedies, but he
could not stanch the flowing tide. A deep
artery, far beyond his reach, had been severed.
All human aid was unavailable.

Before the dying girl, and the kneeling,
stricken man, stood the man of God—the
same who had officiated at the marriage
scene of four hours since. This time, too,
he held an open book in his hand. His fa-
therly face was wet with falling tears.

Lying on the bed, motionless as death, was
the poor heart-broken mother. Near her,
upon her knees, her glorious golden hair in
wild disarray, her head propped upon the
bed, was Agnes.

She was praying.

The stricken girl in the chair closed her
eyes for a moment, and her lips murmured
faintly to herself. Then she aroused herself
and glanced around her. Her breath was
feebly rapid.

"Brandy! brandy! doctor!" she moaned.

"I have something—something to say! I—I
—must say it!"

Without a word the physician reached out
and took a wine-glass, containing the stimu-
lant, from the mantel-piece. He placed it to
the lips of the girl. She drank deeply.

A moment or so of stifling silence passed.
Suddenly the girl raised her drooping head.

"Listen, friends. I—I—have my reason
again now! One winter night, a year ago this
night—old John Arlington came across the
bridge and entered the plain. He had been
drinking. He was followed by two men,
walking some distance apart. I was out
that night, wandering! wandering!—for my
soul was at unrest—and—and—but I must
hurry—my sands are fast running! . . .

The old man stumbled along. The one be-
hind him hastened up. Then a pistol-shot
rang in the air. Old John Arlington fell.
The man rushed up to him, and leaned
down. At that moment the other, who had
lingered behind, ran up. A struggle ensued,
but the last comer was more powerful; he
flung his antagonist to the ground. And
then he said, wickedly, 'I'll help you!'
With that he drove a knife into the still
breathing body of the old man. Oh! God!

. . . They rifled his body—and then

one of them went for a pick and a spade,
and they buried the old man under the snow
—under the hard earth! I heard the voices;
I knew the men. They were ST. CLAIR AR-
LINGTON—and—and oh! God!—my poor
brother, DELANEY. Then another figure ap-
peared. It was poor old crazy Noon. They
fired at him, and he fell too! I then fled.
And, my friends, I always went to the spot,
and mourned over the old man—went there
when the moon was shining—on the 14th!

For a strange infatuation led me thither, and
—and—I made the Shadow!—I dared not
tell the horrible tale—for my poor, dear brother
would have been in danger. But, the
time has come—and—and—ah! God—he
has murdered me! But—but—kind friends,
harm him not! He knew not it was I!"

She paused. The red blood was still flow-
ing profusely from the terrible wound. A
cold shudder passed over her frame. She
suddenly whispered:

"And now—now—Clavis—darling—idol-
ized Clavis—are you ready?" and she pressed
his hand tenderly.

A great sob burst from Clavis Warne's
bosom; but he bowed his head, and then
looked up.

The young man, still kneeling, took both
her hands in his, and bowed his head to the
minister to proceed.

Then ensued a wondrous solemn scene.
The awe-inspiring ceremony was over, and
Clavis Warne and Dora Howe were united
at last.

A wild exultant fire, for a moment, gleam-
ed in the eyes of the dying girl; a heavenly
smile lighted up her scarp features, and she
murmured, in a voice just audible:

"At last! AT LAST! . . . Kiss me, Clavis—
my husband!"

Then her head went down slowly upon
his shoulder, the dark, clustering masses fall-
ing wildly upon his bosom.

A moment, and the physician said, in a
voice that sounded preternaturally solemn:

"Dead!"

A long, low, heart-bursting wail broke
from Clavis Warne's bosom. His eyes
—A holy silence settled in the death-cham-
ber.

The air was fanned by the sweep of angels'
wings.

LEAVOIT TO THE READER.

There is, but little now to say; that we
will tell briefly.

Old crazy Noon corroborated all that was
told by poor Dora Howe, and added that the
murderers had flung his body into the creek.
He revived with the shock, crawled out up-
on the ice, and dragged himself to the man-
sion, where, watching his opportunity, he
crept in, and secreted himself in the garret.

Gradually he had recovered. Knowing
many of the old secret passages with which
the house was filled, he readily managed to
get out and obtain food. He was the shad-
owy shape about the house—the person who
had taken the memorandum-book from De-
laney Howe's vest-bosom; also the scrip;
and the one who had made the mysterious
noises about the mansion. He it was, too,
who had written the letters to Clavis Warne.
He it was who, away back in one of the
"visions," had helped his old master to bury
the treasure.

Time passed on. Nothing was heard of
Delaney Howe—and at the end of one year,
Agnes obtained a regular divorce.

Eighteen months from the night of that
death-bed wedding scene, there was another
marriage—a very quiet one, at the mansion.
Agnes and Clavis were at last united in holy
wedlocks.

The poor old mother—the widow Howe—
rapidly followed her unfortunate daughter
to the grave, dying of a broken heart.

Mother and daughter were both buried in
the little Padron Cemetery, and a monu-
ment was in time erected over each, by
Clavis Warne and his loving wife. These
two often went within and shed silent tears,
and cast beautiful immortelles upon the stone,
which marked the resting-spot of the pure-
hearted, virgin wife.

Years rolled away. Once, on a tour to the
continent, Clavis Warne stood with his wife
upon his arm, on the steps of St. Peter's, in
Rome. As the two watched the evolutions
of a battalion of the Pontifical Zouaves, sud-
denly Agnes caught sight of a face in the
ranks. She shuddered wildly, and slipping
her arm more closely in that of her husband,
drew him away into the holy quiet of the
great cathedral.

Despite the wear and tear of years—des-
pite the ravenous leech of remorse preying
upon his heart—despite the gaudy uniform
covering his person—Agnes knew the face
and figure to be those of DELANEY HOWE!

But, he saw them not.

A few years after this, one cold winter
morning, following a stormy night, the dead
body of a man, half covered with the frigid
drapery of snow, was found lying, stark and
stiff, upon the broad stone over Dora Howe's
grave.

Though time had changed his features, yet
one glance was sufficient to let all who look-
ed know that it was the erring brother,
come home to die.

The terrible cave secret, two blackened
skeletons—at last came to light. But none
knew of this terrible ending of the "Buc-
caners of the Plain."

the little door, passed through the knot of idlers collected around it and proceeded on her way homeward. I followed, discreetly, some twenty paces in the rear. Luckily it was for her that I had waited, for on turning into Houston street, she was surrounded by a half a dozen or so of well-dressed loafers, that seem to spring out of the pavements of New York after nightfall, something as the armed men came from Cadmus' dragon-teeth. The girl shrunk to one side and endeavored to avoid them; but the attempt was useless, for, with coarse words and ribald jest they surrounded her.

"Hallo, my pretty dear!" cried one, apparently the leader of the party. "Ain't you afraid to be out so late? Shan't I see you home?"

A loud laugh from his companions proved that they enjoyed the covert insult.

As luck would have it, I had my cane with me—a good, stout hickory stick, as large round as a man's thumb—no bad weapon in a skirmish.

"Hold on, gentlemen," I said, quite politely, advancing to the side of the shrinking girl, and twirling my stick carelessly in my fingers, "you have made a slight mistake in regard to this lady. Take my arm, miss," I added, addressing the trembling girl.

She instantly accepted the proffered arm. I saw by her eyes that she had recognized me. "Look-a-here; what right have you got for to interfere, asked the discomfited 'bloody' still, however, keeping out of the reach of my stick.

"I am a friend of the lady, and if you wish any further information I refer you to yonder policeman," I said.

"Come along, Dick!" cried another of the fast young men, and speedily they departed. The policeman hint was quite sufficient.

"I'm very much obliged, sir," said the girl, earnestly, as we proceeded along the street, arm in arm.

"Don't mention it, I beg," I replied. "I suppose you know that I am a neighbor of yours?"

"Yes," she said, and even in the darkness of the night I could see that there was a half-smile, half-blush upon her face. It was very evident that she had detected me watching her.

"I suppose that I ought to apologize for looking at you so intently," I said, "but then you must consider that when I look out of my window, naturally I look at yours. Besides, of course, seeing you at the window I had a natural curiosity to know who you were."

"Yes, that is natural," she replied, smiling. "I confess, on my part, that I looked at you more, probably, than I ought to have done. But I couldn't help wondering when I saw that you wrote steadily from morning till night."

"I am an author," I said; "my name is Agile Penne."

"And mine is Leda Edwards." The thought of the painting—Leda and the swan—flashed into my mind and, mentally, I compared the second Leda to the first, and the comparison was not much to the disadvantage of the former.

"And you are in the theater?" I asked.

"Yes, I am a ballet-girl," she answered, honestly. "You do not think any the worse of me because I am a ballet-girl, do you?" and I saw plainly that she put the question with some little anxiety.

"No," I replied; "my education has been a liberal one. I respect an actress if she be a good pure woman as much as if she followed any other occupation."

"Ah!" she said, with a sigh, "but all the world does not think like you. I have been upon the stage now a year, and I do not think I am worse in any particular than when I sewed in a dressmaker's shop in the Bowery."

"How did you come to go on the stage?" I asked.

"I will tell you," she replied, "if you think it worth your while to listen."

"Certainly," I said.

"I came to New York with my father and mother just after the war ended. We came from Virginia. Father was a soldier on the southern side, and lost every thing in the war. Shortly after we arrived in New York my father died, and left mother and I to struggle alone in the world. My mother did not long survive the loss of father. She sickened and went from this cold world to join him in a better land. I procured work with a dressmaker, but I was not very strong and could not bear the constant confinement. I felt that if I did not obtain some other employment I should soon join my parents. And though I had but little wish to live, yet I knew it was sinful to give myself up to death. A young girl, with whom I became acquainted, was engaged in the ballet. She saw that the constant work with the needle was killing me, and so she advised me to go on the stage. I had always thought that I should like to be an actress, and I had been told that some of the greatest stars of the stage were once ballet-girls, and though the position was humble, yet I knew that as long as I was a good girl, there was no disgrace attached to it. So I went on the stage. I receive eight dollars a week, and the stage-manager has promised me that next season he will give me little parts to play and then my salary will be increased."

"But are you not exposed to great temptation?" I asked.

"Not from those connected with the stage," she answered, quickly; "the actors are nearly all gentlemen, and I have yet to receive the first insulting word or look from any one of them. The insults come from young men like those whom you so kindly saved me from to-night. The stage-manager and ballet-master are sometimes a little cross, but that is when we are stupid and don't comprehend their teachings. People not connected with the theater have very little idea of what the ballet-girls are. Why, one of the leading actors of the country married a ballet-girl, hardly a year ago. She was in the same theater that he was playing a star engagement in. None of his folks think any the worse of her because she was in the ballet before she was married."

"I confess I am somewhat astonished at your statement," I said.

"Of course, there are good and bad everywhere," she continued; "all in the theater are not good girls, neither are all the shop-girls good."

"By this time we had arrived at her door. I asked and obtained permission to call upon her."

And thus our acquaintance began.

Nightly I escorted her home from the theater.

It was useless to attempt to disguise my feelings. I loved her. I confessed that love and won from her the sweet confession that she loved me in return. She promised that in three months' time, she would become my wife.

Two months of these passed away.

On the first night of the third month, a new pantomime was produced at the theater in which Leda was engaged; and in the pantomime, Leda was to make her debut as an actress; the part of the "Speaking Fairy" being entrusted to her.

Eagerly, in a front seat, I waited to see my Leda succeed, for I felt sure that she would; and she did.

That very indulgent monster, the Public, took a fancy to her fresh young face, and as she spoke her speeches naturally and prettily, rewarded her with their approbation.

I could plainly see the smile of joy lighting up her features as the applause fell upon her ears. Ah! the Public little guesses how dear its applause is to the heart of the artist.

In the transformation at the end of the pantomime Leda ascended in a golden shell, surrounded by colored fires, to the clouds, forming the center picture.

The curtain descended amid a burst of applause, again it was rung up, and the final tableau again displayed.

Hardly had the curtain touched the stage the second time, when I heard a crash behind the scenes—something had evidently given way. The audience pouring out of the auditorium in haste had not noticed the noise.

A sickening chill crept over me; I remembered the dangerous position of Leda, high above the stage.

Frantic with the thought, I rushed to the back door of the theater. The doorkeeper, of course, knew me, as I was in the habit of coming for Leda, and admitted me without question. I made my way to the stage and there beheld a sight which congealed my blood with horror.

In the center of the stage, supported on the knee of the rough, grim old stage carpenter, who was now crying like a child, lay Leda, dying. Her golden hair was clotted here and there with blood—the red stains were upon the tinsel-adorned fairy dress that clothed her shapely form. The pale lips were gasping in the agonies of death.

A treacherous wire had given way and Leda had been hurled violently to the stage.

Heart-sick I knelt by the side of the dying girl. The blue eyes unclosed—they rested for a moment upon my face—the lips parted.

"Agile," she murmured, and then the red life-stream choked her utterance. Wildly I kissed away the blood from her colorless lips. A single convulsive motion and Leda lay before me—dead.

I can write no more.

A delicate, petite figure; clouds of golden hair drifting in a waving glory adown

sloping shoulders; two deep, dark-blue eyes, radiant with the first affection of a fond young life. Trevor Courtney stood watching her, a wistful tenderness in his own dark eyes; a shade—what was it?—on his face.

"You seem so different, Doctor Courtney, from your old-time self. Perhaps patients are perverting you?"

Addie Wilmer laughed; a graceful little merriment, that Trevor Courtney loved to hear; that, now, could not remove either the shadow on his heart, or the shade on his countenance.

"You're not ill, Doctor Courtney?"

Addie laid her tiny hand on his arm.

"I think not; I really haven't thought whether I was or not. Do I look so?"

He gazed steadily into her sweet, pure eyes; they dropped under his ardent gaze, and the cheeks flushed consciously.

"Addie, it must be my heart that is troubled. I am sure, now, it is *aching* for the love I bear you."

His face was pale, even while he spoke; but his eyes were full of the intense affection he felt.

For a moment neither broke the deep, sweet silence; then Addie, her beautiful face rosy with maidenly modesty, raised her eyes.

"I am so glad, Trevor. I love you dearly."

His arms were around her; his lips met hers. Could he avoid it? Was he to blame? It was not a true, honest love he bore the girl? He asked himself the questions; then, by an impulse unusual to him, he glanced toward the distant cemetery, as if conscious of the peril awaiting him.

A faint shiver, that startled the lady on his arm, thrilled him; and Addie, glancing up, saw his face was ashen white, and his hand extended in a gesture of terror.

"Trevor, Trevor, what is the matter?"

"Look! coming toward us from the grave, and don't you see it? A floating, floating form, with awful flashing eyes, and streaming black hair?"

His voice was low and full of agitation.

"I see nothing, Trevor, but the sunshine slanting across Miss Thornley's tombstone; the black letters are quite distinct, owing to the clear air."

He looked down in her honest eyes; then up again, and drew a long, relieved breath.

"I must have been dreaming, surely. I was awake all night, and my faculties are a little dulled, possibly. I see nothing now, myself."

"Perhaps they were dulled when you told me you loved me?"

"Marcia," he spoke firmly, but so tenderly, gently; "my poor child, why will you persist in this odd supposition? Do you not know I care for no one? Come, let us talk about a more agreeable subject, if any can interest you, at this pitiful hour."

"I'm not afraid, Trevor Courtney," young though I am, I willingly will die if I but carry with me the knowledge that you care for me; nay, more, the promise that you will not marry any one—Addie Wilmer in particular, with her long, sun-burnished hair, and eyes blue as the June heavens."

She was growing excited now, and Doctor Courtney noted the feverish pulse.

"Marcia, my dear friend, let me call your mother; I hear her pacing anxiously by the door. Surely the ten minutes are up that you begged for; surely you will let me recall her to your side."

"No—no, Trevor Courtney, not till I hear you swear eternal fealty to me. Swear it, I command you!"

Her voice rose to a frenzied pitch; it was a moment when any other thought save that of soothing the half-crazed, dying girl was forgotten; and the handsome young physician, deeming it the best thing he could do, both socially and professionally, took her hot head against his breast.

"Marcia, I promise."

Like a sun-rift through a cloud, her face brightened, and she smiled.

"I knew you would, Trevor, my own. I knew you'd forget the time I quarreled, and you refused to make up. I knew you'd love me again. I know now you'll be true to me."

For a moment she lay quiet; then, in a low, weird tone, that, despite his better judgment, thrilled him with a nameless, terrible dread, she spoke:

"But if you disregard this promise—oh, Trevor, if you dare do it—I will come from the spirit-world; by your side I will go, visible to you; invisible to any one else. Then will I chide you for your falsity; I can't now."

Her voice grew fainter; and Trevor sprung for the parents, who, at their daughter's beseeching request, had left her alone with her once betrothed lover.

An hour after, Marcia Thornley had done with earth; and Trevor Courtney was bound to her by an indissoluble tie; indissoluble, so far as honor went—so far as the dead girl meant it.

A delicate, petite figure; clouds of golden hair drifting in a waving glory adown

She smiled archly. "No," he cried out almost fiercely, as if in defiance of the power he feared, "no, Addie, my darling. I can not remember the time when I did not love; I always shall; and one of these days we will be happy forever with each other."

He kissed her tenderly, while at his heart there were conflicting emotions.

"Shall I take you home now, dearest? The dew will begin to fall soon; and I can't afford to have you take cold. Besides, I have several calls to make yet before office-hours."

Together they walked home; past the silent city of the dead, and when Trevor Courtney saw the fresh-cut grass on Marcia's grave, and the exceedingly natural appearance of the spot, where lingered a friend or so, gazing in mournful silence on her resting-place, he felt his spirits rise; and he kissed Addie adieu with unwonted delight.

"You may say what you please, Addie, but I insist that Doctor Courtney is not the man he used to be."

Grandma Wilmer glanced over the golden bows of her spectacles to see Addie's flushed face.

"Why, grandma?"

"He acts as if ever under some restraint; as if he was afraid of leaving undone, or fearful of committing some appointed task. I can not explain exactly what I mean, but perhaps you will understand."

A shiver thrilled through Addie's heart.

"I do know, grandma. Oh, I wish I didn't! He often speaks strangely; often starts, and declares he sees something which I never can see. Oh, grandma, if he is going to die, what will I do?"

She buried her face in the soft folds of the old lady's dress; and grandma stroked her hair tenderly.

"It must be a fearful cross, my poor child, but we all have one great trouble in our lifetime. Addie, I would rather see young Doctor Courtney lying dead before me, than see him as I expect to see him a year hence."

Addie sprung up, in alarm.

"What? What do you mean?"

"My poor child—can you not see it—have you not seen it? Have you not heard the whisperings around the village that handsome young Doctor Trevor Courtney is becoming—what his mother was before him—insane?"

A scream burst from Addie's lips.

"Oh, merciful God!"



THE SPIRIT GUIDE.

The Spirit Guide.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"SWEAR it, by all you hold sacred! swear by all your present joys, your future hopes!"

Her black eyes were flashing with fiercest earnestness, and her long, heavy hair swept like a darkening shadow down over her graceful white shoulders.

"Say," she continued, gasping and retaining the shapely white hand almost womanly in its faultless contour. "I can not—no, I will not die, until I have your oath! Be quick; for sweet mercy's sake, be quick, or my ears will grow so dulled that I shall not hear you. Quick, Trevor Courtney, quick!"

A pallor overspread the young man's noble face, and he bent half-swooningly, half-carelessly over the dying woman.

"You are permitting yourself to become fearfully excited, Marcia. Be calm; remember you can not live more than a few hours if you use your remaining strength in this manner."

"Don't try to evade my question, Trevor Courtney! Don't put me off any longer; for if I die in the attempt I will have the promise from you!"

She was quivering in every limb, and as Courtney noted the frightful burning on her thin cheeks, he laid his cool palm over her lips.

"I insist upon quiet. As your physician, Marcia, I command it. As—as—"

He hesitated, and a faint flush crept over his face. The girl saw it, and a cry of keen bitterness escaped her.

"You were going to say 'lover,' but when you remembered Addie Wilmer's blue eyes you changed your mind. Oh, Trevor, Trevor, can not I even die claiming the love I once held, the love I have lived for, am dying for? Trevor, have mercy—oh, have mercy! Don't send me off to the spirit-land without one kiss for the sake of the past!"

Her plaintive, agonized words smote keenly on the young physician, but an expression of peculiar meaning gathered around his eyes.

The Ebon Mask:

THE MYSTERIOUS GUARDIAN.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.
AUTHOR OF THE "SCARLET CRESSANT," "INFERRED WIFE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BATTERED FATE.

AFAR in the grove shone a light, now bright, now dim, as the waving branches revealed or obscured its glew.

"Almost there. Spur up, Pepe. Who knows but that, at this very moment, the villains are within?"

Again they dashed on; and in a few moments alighted close by the humble entrance to the hut. The door burst open; Helene sprang to Julian's arms, almost insensible from her great joy. A single glance had sufficed to show him all was, as yet, safe, and extending a hand to Senora Valencia, with the other arm he pressed his beauteous betrothed closer to his heart.

The scene was one of bliss and joy; language were feeble to portray the deep, overflowing happiness that filled each breast. But, it was of short duration.

Sounds of approaching footsteps, stealthy and indistinct, alarmed them, and Julian, tenderly removing Helene from his side, started suddenly to his feet.

"Your rifle and knife, Pepe—are they ready?"

An assenting nod satisfied him.

"Come, then, we must hide, and let them get fully within. Do not be alarmed, my darling, at whatever may happen. Trust to us, and you are safe."

They crept behind a partition that divided the room into two apartments. Hardly had they accomplished that when the door opened, and a face, hideous and contorted, was thrust partly in. A second, and two men, armed with ready weapons, stood inside the door, staring maliciously around.

With a scream, Helene rushed to her mother's arms.

"Oh, mother, mother, they are the men who took me that day!"

Clasping her protectingly, the lady confronted the intruders.

"What do you here, and whom do you desire?"

"There's w'at we're after," grinned Ricovi for the reader will readily perceive who the men were—"come 'long back home, eh?"

"Do you dare threaten us? Leave this cottage instantly, as you value your lives," sternly commanded the signora, her eyes blazing with indignation.

"Women can't skeer me, nowhow!"

He advanced to Helene, and his companion turned to her mother.

"Hold there, or you are dead men!" yelled Julian at the instant, and rushing impetuously upon Ricovi, he leveled him senseless with a well-directed blow between the eyes, while Pepe, with equal precipitancy, had surprised the other rogue who stood against the wall, and held him by the point of his bayonet.

"A motion of your finger, even, and this runs you through," fiercely declared Pinto, pricking him slightly as he spoke.

A moment sufficed to bind the ruffian, hand and foot, with the fetters Julian had brought, and the bayonet placed under his chin, he was unable to move his head without suffering a pretty sharp prick.

Ricovi, too, being senseless, was easily secured, and laid under a table to wake to consciousness and captivity.

"And now, Julian, what remains to be done? These fellows are our prisoners, yet we dare not report to Colonel Zarate."

"True, for he would, without hesitation, transfer the bracelets to you and I."

"May I be permitted to advise?" inquired a sweet voice.

They all turned quickly in the direction from which the tones came.

A graceful, black-robed lady stood in the center of the apartment.

"Leota, dear lady, when did you return?" joyously queried Helene.

"And how gain access to this room, without our knowledge?" asked her mother.

"Oh, I am a mystery yet, you know, although I imagine any one could noiselessly enter the door when you were all so engaged with your company."

She pointed to the prisoners.

In astonishment Julian looked on.

"I beg your pardon, my friend, for neglecting to address you, but you see how utterly impossible it was. However, I warmly welcome you, uniting in the general joy your return occasions."

He respectfully bent over the extended hand.

"But, lady, remember I am in entire ignorance of your name; therefore can not address you as I should. Please accept my warmest thanks for your kind interest in the welfare of a stranger."

"Oh, no, you are no stranger, my boy; a long time have I watched over you and noted the growing friendship existing between Helene and yourself, which, under my blessing and Heaven's permission, has ripened into love."

"Bless you, dear lady, and may you be eternally rewarded for your disinterested kindness to an orphan boy, whose only friends save these lie sleeping side by side in the far North."

His voice was husky and tears stood in his eyes.

"Disinterested kindness, Julian? No, indeed, for I am anticipating an immense reward," smiled Leota, archly.

"Don't look so surprised, Julian," said Helene. "She means all she says, but you will not be able to comprehend her. 'Mysterious' she claims to be."

"My friends, 'tis almost day, and we all need rest. Let us part for a brief time, and seek repose. The prisoners will need our beds; the advice I intend will do as well a few hours hence. *Buenos noches!*"

The first gray streaks of dawn were visible in the east; the stars were gone, and the restless clouds of the night before had scurried off, leaving promise of a pleasant day. It yet wanted an hour of sunrise, but an impatient form might be seen pacing up and down before the officers' quarters at the block-house. Within all was silent; the officers were sleeping on their bamboo-settees, and the guards drowsily whiling away the unoccupied hours off duty.

Without, the solitary figure, clad in bright, shining uniform, walked to and fro. His gaze was up the road, in the direction of the cypress grove; a cloud of impatience, discouragement and fear shadowed his face, while from the haughty lips fell the oft-repeated expression:

That was the only complaint she ever uttered; grandma smoothed her hair gently; then, after an hour's unnatural quiet, she arose and went about again, quiet, crushed, but not broken.

The flowers had dropped their petals, and the forest-artist had touched the foliage with his inspired brush.

Away up on a hill-top, where the cool October winds were blowing in a pleasant room in that spacious building, was a handsome man, young, intelligent in appearance, and gracefully proud in demeanor.

He was standing by the window, gazing earnestly down the sloping path. Suddenly he turned, almost fiercely, to a gentleman sitting beside the open fire.

"I told you she'd come! Don't you see—floating, floating along, with her eyes black as the letters on her tombstone? There, she's right near the window now; there, she is! Marcia! Marcia! I don't starve, you chile me to death! your eyes look so dead—not at all like the other one's blue eyes. I know you hated her; I know I fairly worshiped her—there, I am not afraid of you, when Doctor Morgan's here—I did love her, and you might as well go back to your grave again and rest, for I'll never marry you! What if I did promise? Promises go for nothing now-a-days. I swear—I swear—do you remember that?—I swear to marry Addie the hour I leave this, my castle."

He seemed exhausted; and while talking had kept walking backward, with his hands before him, as if to ward off some vengeance pursuing power.

"There, Marcia Thornley! I say, go back to your grave, and let them put your eyes back on the tall monument. I'd go with you, only I have gone after you too many times. You remember, don't you, how you led me, all powerless, over the hills and down the valleys? Well, I shan't go any more."

It was pitiful to see the noble-browed, handsome young fellow; and the attending physician laid his hand on young Courtney's shoulder.

"Come, doctor; shall we have a turn at the dumb-bells?"

The spell—that came regularly every morning, that could not be warded off by any possible remedy—was broken, and together the gentlemen entered the gymnasium.

Afar off, Addie Wilmer watches the spire of the mad-house, and prays for comfort under her sorrows.

"What can detain them?"

For the fortieth time, probably, he had ejaculated the same question, and at each repetition, his face grew darker and more apprehensive.

Sounds of footsteps startled him; eagerly he turned; an expression of impatience escaped him, for 'twas only a boy, and he surely thought 'twas Ricovi.

But the lad, instead of passing on, came up to him and handed him a note.

"An answer if you please, sir."

The frown deepened as he read:

"COLONEL ANTONIO ZARATE:
"By order of Colonel Aguirre De Leon I am commanded to request that you will meet him near the hut in the cypress grove at the appointed time, instead of the bay-road. Begging that you will not decline to thus favor him, I am happy to have the extreme honor to remain,
With profound respect,
Your obedient servant,
MANUEL ROSALES,
Captain, etc."

"The hut in the cypress grove!" By what strange fatality had that place been selected? Surely De Leon could not possibly know of it? Of course not; the idea was preposterous. He had doubtless selected the place as being more private, and, in case of anything more serious, the hut was conveniently near. Besides, supposing Helene were there now, and her mother too? Ricovi and his accomplice would soon be back with one or both in custody.

"Tell Captain Rosales, yes,"
"Is that all I shall say?"

"That is all, Yaya!"

Just as the boy turned away, a carriage drove up to the door, and an elderly man sprang out.

"Ah, Jacinto, I am rejoiced to see you; punctual as usual. Come in, and regale yourself with chocolate."

The two officers entered the apartment, and were passing through, when an orderly in hot haste advanced to Zarate.

"Colonel, the prisoner, Julian the hunter, has escaped through a hole cut in the wall!"

"Escaped, orderly? You tell me he has escaped? Can it be possible after the extra precautions I took last night?"

"He went by the outside, I said, sir—dug a hole in the wall. His chains are gone, too."

"Detail fifty men and scour the woods, and bring him back, dead or alive."

That terrible baffled look was fearful to behold as it settled ashily over Zarate's face; a pale rage seemed to possess him, and his eyes were cold and stony, his voice shrill and unnatural as he addressed Jacinto:

"It is almost sunrise, signor, and the time is come. Let us go. And if Ricovi or the orderly returns with either of the escapees," he added, turning to his lieutenant, "have them scourged until I return."

Donning his hat, and shouldering the heavy, awkward Spanish rifle, he and Jacinto and the post-surgeon, Dr. Viscarra, entered the carriage and rode to meet—

what?

CHAPTER XVII.

A LIFTING OF THE YAIL.

"WHAT, awake and up so early? Surely you can not have had sufficient rest. Remember it was well on to the morning when we retired."

Helene turned her bright face to the questioner, Leota, and looked at him with a smile.

"Might I not ask the same of you? But I will confess I should have indulged in a little more sleep had not the movements of these men disturbed me," she replied, pointing to the captives.

Leota glanced at them, and an expression of satisfaction flitted across her face.

"Oh, Leota, who is that coming?" suddenly asked Helene, who had gone to the window to inhale the fresh morning air.

"Do you think they can be emissaries of the commandant?" she asked, apprehensively.

"What if they are—are not we well protected?"

She glanced at the sleeping hunter and Pepe, who had watched their charge till day, then finding them perfectly quiet and secure, had indulged in a slight slumber.

"Yes, yes, but if they should prove hostile and overpower us!"

"Nonsense!" cheerfully laughed Leota; "to me their occupation is not hostile—to us."

Silently they watched the movements without. It was about fifty yards from the window that two men were busily employed pulling up bushes and clearing the ground for the space of a few rods. At that distance the features were indistinct, but that they wore officers' uniforms was evident, the glittering straps and buttons being sufficiently prominent to dispel any doubt on that score.

The men had desisted in their work, and seemed awaiting something or somebody. Suddenly the sound of carriage-wheels came crashing through the bushes, then stopped. A moment elapsed, and three gentlemen entered the cleared space—one, tall, haughty and elegant, the others, less so in their appearance.

Some conversation ensued, and the watchers in the hut saw one, the handsomest gentleman in uniform, turn and gaze toward them.

Helene saw his features plainly, and her face was pallid with terror as she gasped:

"Zarate!"

Julian and Pepe sprang to their feet, but Leota's reassuring smile was sufficient to stay them, and gently removing Helene and

placing her on the settee, she took the young men aside and communicated something to them—something that prevented any surprise when they joined Helene at the casement to watch the proceedings.

The parties had changed positions and their situation was suspiciously indicative of their intent.

"A duel, oh, a duel!" murmured Helene, pale and sick. "Indeed, I can not witness it. See, see, the rifles are raised! Quick, let me go before they fire!"

She rushed from the window and gained the other room just as a loud report fell upon her ear, and a heavy fall was distinctly heard at the hut.

It was Zarate who fell, his right side pierced by the ball from De Leon's rifle. He had instantly fallen, exclaiming: "I'm shot; De Leon, you've killed me."

Jacinto, his second, and Doctor Viscarra rushed to his side. Rigid, and apparently lifeless, he lay upon the ground, yet damp with the morning dew.

"Remove his clothes, doctor. Is he dead?" asked Jacinto, bending over him and assisting to strip off his clothing. Viscarra carefully examined the wound.

"I fear the ball has penetrated some vital part; his pulse is nearly gone, and you can see that respiration is entirely suspended."

De Leon came forward and gazed earnestly upon his fallen enemy; his fine features were sad, and his voice, though betraying little emotion, was low and feeble.

"I almost regret this unfortunate termination of affairs. Yet it is better so. Better if he never returns to consciousness again than to learn his future if he recovers. Doctor Viscarra, he needs water—does he not?"

"It is his only chance, but where is there any?"

De Leon pointed to the hut, almost hidden by the trees. Carefully they lifted the wounded soldier and conveyed him to the hut.

"They are coming here; let me go," struggled the affrighted Helene, as she saw the slow, sad procession move toward the door. She was too late, however, for the party had opened the door.

"Come, we will leave the room together, and only too glad, Leota and the ladies vacated the apartment.

For a long time no signs of life were visible in Zarate; but vigorous bathing and strong stimulants at length seemed to re-suscitate him.

He gasped for breath, then sighed deeply, seemingly sensible of his condition. Later his energies seemed to return, and he gazed wonderingly around.

With quiet demeanor the little group watched his motions, as he slowly revived, and at length spoke. Even at that awful hour, his words sent a chill to every heart. His first glances had fallen upon Julian, who had been foremost in assisting him, and a deadly fire lighted his dying eyes.

"Fool, you dare stand there and triumph over me? Never mind, but I'll—"

His breath failed him, but he glared fiercely at him. Julian's face was full of pitying compassion.

"Poor, mistaken soul," he said to De Leon. "And yet we can not pity him, so devoid of any humanity as he is; although I must confess my heart shrinks when I contemplate the revelations he must hear before he dies."

Gradually the wounded man revived; momentarily he grew stronger, until, after the lapse of an hour, he conversed with the physician and Jacinto.

He had several times essayed to address Julian or De Leon, but Viscarra forbade it.

A movement was visible near the rear of the room, and the men stepped back. One gaze, and Zarate sprang to his feet with superhuman strength, only to sink helplessly back.

"Helene, Valencia, you escaped once, but you do not now! Seize her, seize her! Where's Ricovi? Did I not see him?"

"Here I is—all tied up," came from under the table.

Helene hung tremblingly upon her mother's arm. By her side stood Julian, and a little in advance the mysterious Leota.

Zarate's heart beat with a vague terror, and his vile bosom swelled with hatred and jealousy as he beheld them, sweet Helene and her noble lover.

De Leon stood by Leota's side. Waving his hand to enjoin silence, he fixed his stern gaze upon Zarate, and addressed the group:

"My friends, it may seem inappropriate to some of you—those of you who are unacquainted with what I shall shortly reveal—thus to harass the last moments of a dying man."

The wounded officer started and shivered. De Leon continued:

"To us who know, who are familiar with the course pursued by him, no punishment is unmerciful. Now, Colonel Zarate, to you I speak. Listen." He stepped nearer the dying man.

"Know me, not as colonel in the Spanish army—not as 'an equal in rank' with yourself, but, as one who has watched your most secret doings, who has known much of your private life of wickedness. Know me as one who appreciates your entire incapacity as commander of the troops, as one who understands you thoroughly."

"Look upon me, Antonio Zarate, and recognize the secret agent of our king, who was placed here to guard the royal interests, and spy the actions of many who little suspect my purpose. You, Colonel Zarate, have been watched, and through the agency

of a few firm friends your victims have escaped your machinations. Your conduct has been reported, and the king declares you removed and cashiered, should you survive this; such is your doom. And, my friends," he added, turning to the group, who, astounded and surprise-stricken—with two exceptions—listened to his words, "I am also instructed by the same authority to grant full and free pardon to Pepe Pinto, charged with desertion; and to Julian St. John, accused of aiding in the same, but which is, I know, a base fabrication."

De Leon paused, and it would be impossible to describe the awful look in the wretched Zarate's face. Horror, consternation, incredulosity and shame were blended in his countenance as he gazed, helplessly, at the king's agent.

"It appears to me, gentlemen, that this proceeding is unkind. You must perceive you are endangering the patient's life—that a well person would sink under it."

"You are wrong, Viscarra; it is right that the guilty should hear their doom. Possibly when you are an hour older you will change your mind."

Viscarra bowed.

"Other revelations, the blackest of social crimes, stand against your name, Colonel Zarate, and as you seem before a sort of tribunal, you shall hear them before you pass to the terrible presence of the Judge of right and wrong."

Noislessly a graceful figure, clad in deepest mourning, glided up to Zarate where he lay, his head reclining on Viscarra's breast.

"Do you remember 'Leota of the Elbon Mask,' whose warning you despised? I am she; and I will honestly confess, in thus coming to you, more pain is experienced than pleasure. But, for humanity's sake, for her sake, the spotless Helene, I come."

"Antonio, it is many years ago, but don't you remember the shady cottage on the banks of the softly-flowing Guadalquivir, where the sweet flowers bloomed, and balmy breezes blew? Don't you remember another flower, a human blossom, whom you swore to protect and cherish, love and guard? One who gave her young heart in all its freshness and girlish purity to you, her husband? Yes, Antonio, you have not forgotten her, though you thought she had ceased to think of you. Do you remember your wife—Isabella?"

She threw off her heavy mask-veil.

"My God, Isabella! What do you here?" he groaned.

Helene darted forward, and gazed earnestly in Leota's face.

"My promise is fulfilled, dear child, never to unmask till I disclosed his wickedness."

Of the assembled group but two seemed calm and unsurprised—De Leon and the Senora Valencia.

"Another word, Antonio; would you look upon the features of a beautiful maiden, spotless and pure, despite your machinations? Would you see her again who bears the name of Helene Valencia? She is here; gaze upon her, not as such, but—listen and thank God you escaped the awful crime—as Helene Zarate—your child and mine!"

She turned to Helene, with a cry of rapture.

"Darling, darling, my daughter, my own sweet child!" and she pressed her wildly to her heart.

"Thank God, my mother, my precious mother! How sweet it is—mother, dear mother!"

The two seemed almost exhausted in their heavenly joy; the sight was one angels would smile upon, and bless.

In speechless astonishment the assembled friends looked on; Julian stood like one in a dream, gazing first upon the mother, then upon the weeping child; from them to Signora Valencia, who nodded pleasantly upon the tableau, and to the dying colonel, his blanched face and staring eyes glared upon Helene.

One gaze was sufficient to read his soul. He was overwhelmed. It was too much, all this overpowering news, and he sunk beneath it, as a child covers under a blow. Gradually his frozen lips framed one word—

"Helene!"

She turned her tearful eyes upon him, then buried them in her mother's breast.

But Julian stood like one possessed.

"I can not understand it," he ejaculated, passing his hand bewilderingly over his brow.

"But 'tis true; true as the Scriptures; and the proof, look at us!"

Leota—or Signora Zarate—turned her face and Helene's toward the lover. He gazed scrutinizingly at them.

"Yes, it is so; the same lustrous hair, the same beautiful eyes, the expression, the voice, the manner. Mother—my mother; I am your son. You will not reject the love of another child?"

"Never," she replied, tenderly. "Here, Julian," she said, uniting their hands and clasping them in her own, "receive my blessing—a mother's warmest benison. May He who has so signally favored us and restored us all to each other, ever love, and guide, protect and bless you!"

Julian bent and pressed a loving kiss on Helene's fair cheek, tears of joy coursing down their faces; the mother and foster-mother embraced her in silent joy, while the rough men, the hardy soldiers, could not repress the rising tears, and struggled vainly to conceal their emotion. All but Zarate, who, in his abject grief, was more

repulsive than when defiant. He did not seem to relapse, and the surgeon proposed taking him again to his quarters, where he could be cared for.

"No, no, I won't go," he whispered. "Let me die! Ruined, disgraced, what have I to live for? A wife who hates me, a child who fears me, enemies on every hand. No, no, I won't live; I must die!"

Something of the old spirit had returned.

"And, again, Zarate," said De Leon, "let me explain why I appeared so pleased with your diabolical plans. It was policy; you remember I never suggested any thing. It was necessary I should do so, in order to prove what was long suspected. And with the aid of your injured wife, or 'Leota' and 'Nina,' I took good care that no ultimate harm should befall your victims. The challenge to the duel was accidental, but a well-fitting link in the chain of events that has led to this grand result."

"Where is Nina?" asked Helene, of her mother.

"She is here now, darling. I will call her."

Leota left the room, and in a second Nina, with her beautiful veil of flowing hair, entered.

"Did not Nina tell the forest-bird the hunter had a strong arm and a stout heart to save her?"

Helene started as she heard the voice. There was something, a memory of an indistinct past, a longing for something, a vague, unsatisfactory feeling.

"Nina will say adieu, forever, to the forest-flower. But the warm sun and the refreshing dew will ever invigorate and enliven and beautify her. Nina goes forever. Adieu!"

She quietly withdrew, as Leota returned, her veil laid aside.

"Has she gone so quickly?" asked she.

"No, signora; 'Nina' still remains, no less loved than 'Leota'—no less admired than 'Isabella.' Allow me," said Julian, archly, with a wise smile.

He unpinned her wealth of hair; it fell almost to her feet, shading her sweet face, and 'Nina' smiled from under it.

The illusion was complete, and the triple mask was unmasked!

"A few words of explanation might be interesting, and if you are willing I will tell you."

"Zarate, may I tell them about it?" asked his wife, gently.

He essayed to speak, but his strength seemed unequal to the task. His face had lost every trace of its former fierceness, and he looked like a weary child.

"Husband, will you listen to me—to Isabella, your wife?"

How strangely tender, how unspeakably reproachful in its sweetness, sounded that long unused title!

His eye lighted suddenly, and he whispered to Viscarra:

"Lady, he requests a last favor—one he feels utterly unworthy of. He would beg you to take my place."

The request created the intensest surprise, and they gazed at him in undisguised astonishment. He, the lawless villain, so humble? Impossible! They knew not the change the immediate vicinity of death can arouse.

Unhesitatingly she arose, and motioning Viscarra away, tenderly took her husband's head and rested it on her bosom, smoothing the damp, disordered hair. He grasped her hand tightly, and lovingly caressed it.

"Isabella, mia cara, I am dying, dying; going down to my doom with a heavy load on my soul. Oh, my wife, I don't blame you for all the misery I have experienced this day, for I have caused you a thousand-fold more. De Leon, we were friends once, over in beautiful Spain, were we not? Then, for the sake of that past, forgive me—me, who twenty-four hours ago would have scorned asking forgiveness of any one. And oh—"

His voice grew faint, and a cold sweat stood on his brow.

Even those who had been most severe wept at the sight, and De Leon, the stern soldier, turned to hide a tear. Truly it was a strange sight, this strong man just in the prime of life, so lately the incarnation of all that was vile, now subdued and dying, with his head reclining on the bosom of her he had so cruelly injured. The lion had been transformed into the lamb; and Antonio Zarate was what years of punishment never could have made him—Repentant.

"And all in so brief a time?" queries a doubting reader.

I would answer to such, even so. Have you never seen the mighty giant oak, the lord of the forest, rear its lofty head in almost conscious superiority over its less aspiring neighbors? Have you noticed, when in all the glory of brilliant bloom, of massive strength, the crashing lightning-flash split the proud forest-king, in a single instant laying it low, even lower than its humble neighbors?

That is like Antonio Zarate; the one blow so sudden, so fearful in its concentrated strength and bitterness, had been more than even his proud nature could bear; he had sunk under it, conquered and dying.

"But your promised explanation, signora?"

She gently caressed the head lying on her forgiving bosom—and what can not a wife forgive?—which soon would be forever at rest under the cold earth that waited to receive him, and in a low, soft voice related her story:

"It was twenty years ago that I met my ideal of manly excellence in my humble home at Xeres de Fontana, in beautiful

Spain, just where the Guadalquivir poured its broad waves into the sea. It was there I learned to love him, there where he whispered to my willing ear the oft-told tales of love so sweet to me. In six months we were married, at the little chapel in Xeres de Fontana, by our priest, and as his wife I was blissfully happy; Isabella St. Albion never dreamed of such joy as Isabella Zarate experienced. But only a short fortnight did I live thus. One morning my husband went away, as usual, but he never returned. How well I remember the agony of the time when I was compelled to believe he had left me, left me alone! Never can I forget the utter desolation of my heart when I could no longer blind myself to the fact that I was a deserted wife! Heaven alone witnessed my burning agony.

"Months rolled on, and then I knew I would be a mother—of his child and mine—of him who had left his girl-wife, who never would look upon his baby's face."

"I prayed then that we might die, I and my child—that a kind Father would take me out of this cruel world; but it was a wicked prayer."

"And then Helene, my black-eyed darling, came to console my worse than widowed heart with her baby sweetness."

"Antonio, you didn't know it, did you?" she asked him.

"She grew in beauty and health, and it was when she acquired the age of two years, that I determined to take her and search for him. So, accompanied by my widowed sister, Elise Valencia, whom I persuaded to appear as the babe's mother, I started after my husband."

"For some time I was unsuccessful; from place to place I journeyed, but the regiment had always left, and at length, discouraged, I was about abandoning my design, when I learned he had gone to America; and to America I came, leaving my child and her 'mamma,' as she called my sister, in Spain."

"For a long time I remained in Pensacola, acting my role of 'Nina,' thereby frequently seeing my husband. Then I sent for Elise and my daughter—a beautiful girl of sixteen, who had acquired a superior education in her native land. As a crazy Nina, she became interested in me, and oh! the anguish of my soul when I watched her budding loveliness, and yearned so to have her call me 'mother!' But I only could guard her, and I did; then when she first met Julian St. John, how I watched him to see if he were worthy my peerless Helene. That he was, you may know by the present engagement existing between them."

"At last I formed in my mind the plan of adopting another disguise, and, as 'Leota of the Elbon Mask,' I appeared on various occasions, still preserving my character as 'Nina,' the more to mystify the villagers."

"You all knew how I succeeded; my story is done."

As she finished, Zarate spoke, in a husky voice:

"My injured wife, I feel you have forgiven me, else I could not lie here. I am dying, and soon shall be gone. But there is one request I would make: Helene, oh Helene, my child, my daughter, can you, can you forgive me—your dying, repentant father?"

He reached forth his hand, and his eyes beamed tenderly upon her.

She clung to Julian in her agitation, and looked inquiringly at her mother.

"My daughter, come hither. You and Julian," said she, gently.

They obeyed, and stood before the dying man, who gazed long and earnestly at her sweet face, so like her mother's.

"Tell me, daughter, I am going rapidly—quick, tell me, am I forgiven?"

He held his hand to her; only a second she hesitated, as the awful recollection came surging over her; but that was over; it was a thing of the moment, and this seemed an act of eternity and death, so near did they all feel to the river.

Then she took his hand in hers.

"As I hope to be forgiven, so do I forgive all, my father," and stooping she imprinted a loving kiss on his lips.

An expression of ineffable delight swept over his face, and making a violent effort he grasped Julian's hand, joined it to Helene's, and pressed them feebly to his lips.

He turned to Isabella.

"I'm going; good-by—so unworthy—forgiven—daughter—"

The soul took its flight, as the last breath lingered lovingly on that sweet name. It had gone, and with his head on his wife's bosom, his hand clasping Helene's, he passed away.

The commandant was dead!

And now our story is almost done; yet loth to leave our readers at a death-bed, we beg them to linger a moment while we hastily sketch a scene in the large room on the bay shore, where Isabella Zarate resided. Three months elapsed, and then the garb of mourning was replaced by the garments of rejoicing.

A fair bride was beautiful Helene, in her snowy robes, and fragrant orange-buds; and Julian not a whit less handsome in his proud manliness. The priest has blessed the blushing bride, and together, under fairest auspices, they commence their life's journey.

Heaven speed them!

De Leon is there, and the peerless Isabella; Pepe Pinto and the fair "auntie," Elise Valencia; and rumor says strange things about another nuptial party when

Julian shall congratulate his dignified, "Uncle Pepe!"

Ricovi was justly punished, while José Escobedo received his meritorious acquittal.

Thus each in the cause of right and virtue merited the deserved reward, as all who valorously fight for the victory in the same battle most nobly receive, in their maintenance, we leave them.

THE END.

Duke White:

OR,

THE GREEN RANGER OF THE SCOTO.

BY CHARLES E. LA SALLE,
AUTHOR OF "BURT BUNKER, THE TRAPPER."

CHAPTER XIV.

GRAY WOLF.

For some time succeeding the capture of Lizzie Rushton by the Wyandots, she was buoyed up by a strong hope of rescue, and so long as she was not treated with any personal indignity, her situation was not so distressing as might naturally be supposed.

But, as night and day passed, and her captors steadily journeyed toward the north-west, and she saw and heard nothing of her friends, her spirits began to sink, and she found herself speculating upon the possibility, but upon the probability of soon reaching a point where she would be entirely beyond the efforts of her friends to retake her.

The Wyandots were a powerful tribe, and if she was once fairly domiciled in their main village, it was scarcely possible for her to be recaptured by any thing short of an army.

Often and often, as they moved through the forest, she cast a "long, lingering look," as if she expected to see some familiar face, or hear some well-known voice come from their silent depths, but the woods gave no token, and she moved wearily on again.

The first night spent in camp was one filled with dreams of escape. She had known of persons situated apparently as hopelessly as she, who had stolen like phantoms out of the Indian camp, and made off in the darkness without discovery.

And why shouldn't she?

Heaven being her helper, she would! One of the Wyandots gave her a blanket, and when she saw the others stretching out for the night, she wrapped the heavy blanket about her, and sitting on the ground, placed her head against a large tree.

This gave her the opportunity to scan all the Indians within the field of vision, while feigning sleep herself, and made her less liable to become unconscious than if she were reclining upon the earth.

The fire had been burning brightly, but it was not replenished after the red-skins lay down. It did not die entirely out, but it sunk so low that the dark forms stretched about her had a dim, uncertain appearance, that in the flickering light made the scene weird and impressive in the highest degree.

There was no sleep behind the partially-closed eyelids of Lizzie Rushton. She was waiting and watching her "time."

She had no means of judging of the passing of the night, but she believed it was not far from the turn, when she decided to make the attempt.

For the last hour she had not seen an Indian stir, and she was certain that no sentinels had been placed since they had gone into camp, so that every thing seemed to indicate encouragement. She made several faint, stirring her limbs and faintly coughing to detect the vigilance of her captors; but none of them gave any evidence of hearing her, and her heart beat high with hope.

"I don't understand what this means," she reflected, more than once, "here is a party of Indians who have every reason to believe that they are pursued. Indeed there was an alarm some time ago, and yet they have all gone to sleep; and here am I, a captive who will do any thing to get out of their power, and I haven't had my limbs bound, nor a watch placed over me! If I can only step over these sleeping forms without awaking them, I shall be out in the dark woods where no one can overtake me. What can this mean? It looks too favorable to be genuine."

But, having resolved on the attempt, she rose silently to her feet and began moving away with the stillness of a veritable phantom—stepping slowly and listening so intently that she could hear the throbbing of her own heart.

Not one of the forms stirred. A few steps more, and she had passed beyond the circle of sleepers, and stood on the outer verge.

"Now I am safe," she mused, her heart filled with unspeakable thankfulness; "for, if they should spring away, I can dart into the wood ahead of them—"

"Oooh! go sleep!"

The same well-remembered grip was upon her arm, and the same Wyandot that had seized her as she was fleeing to the block-house, now held her in his vice-like grasp.

As Lizzie was looking at the figures around the camp-fire, this savage had come out of the darkness and caught her. There was no escape, and the instant the red-skin loosened his hold, she walked back to the tree which she had left, and without a word seated herself where she had sat before. She made no reply, said not a word, but there was despair in her heart.

She understood it all now. The Indians who were stretched out around her were really asleep, but, without her knowledge, several were placed in the surrounding woods, and their well known cat-like vigilance was what made the rest lie down in such conscious security. They well knew that no human being could enter into or pass from the camp without being discovered by them.

It was a terrible disappointment to the captive, whose heart had been lifted to the very highest pinnacle of hope but a moment before. She felt for the time as if she should really die as she sat there in her loneliness and utter prostration.

But "balmy sleep" kindly came to her relief. She had passed the better part of two nights without slumber, and now that the all-absorbing theme that had so intensely occupied her mind was removed, exhausted nature yielded, and she sunk into a deep, refreshing slumber.

She needed this rest greatly—not only on account of her past deprivation of it, but to brace and prepare her for the trials that were so close at hand.

Her slumber lasted without interruption through the remainder of the night, and when she awoke, it was from the confusion caused by her captors moving about her. Opening her eyes, she saw that it was broad daylight, and the Wyandots were busy with their preparations for moving onward again.

And so the time passed until the afternoon of the day that we saw close in the last chapter. The Wyandots made a short halt and were pressing forward toward the stream, where our friends were awaiting them; when they were met by Gray Wolf.

The reception accorded to this warrior proved to Lizzie that he was one of the most renowned chiefs of his tribe, and the one who had absolute power among any congregation of his own people. She felt that her fate was transferred from the band of warriors to him, and she scrutinized him with no little eagerness to divine his intentions.

The signs all indicated the worst. The manner of Gray Wolf when his eyes first rested upon the captive showed that he was smitten with "Indian love," and doubtless would claim her as his squaw as soon as they reached the village, if not before.

This was the very thing which Lizzie dreaded, and her heart sunk with a sickening fear, such as she had not known since her capture.

"Oh, why does not George come?" she sighed. "He must have heard of what has happened; does he not love me enough to dare any danger for me?"

Yes; she could not doubt him. She knew he would hasten to her rescue so soon as he could learn of the dire extremity in which she was placed.

But how long? Must he wait until she was the squaw of this dreaded Wyandot chief?

Gray Wolf scanned the poor girl narrowly, and looked so earnestly into her face that she felt the crimson upon her cheeks. He walked beside her, and when they halted stepped directly in front of her, so that she was compelled to turn aside to avoid him.

"Forest Rose," said he, "much pretty—be Gray Wolf's squaw—give her big lodge."

This was what she had been expecting, and she was therefore prepared for it. She hung her head and said nothing, for she could think of nothing to say in reply to such a remark.

There was rising in her heart such an utter abomination of the huge painted human brute—such a hatred of his hideous visage, that she felt a strange, unnatural desire to kill him.

"If he ever lays the weight of his hand on me, I'll do it, too," she muttered to herself.

She could scarcely trust herself to look at him, and yet he was continually obtruding himself before her. He was open and undisguised in his admiration, and his intention of making her his squaw, so soon as they should reach the village or settlement.

And still she said nothing, and at night they reached the ferry and prepared to cross it.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RED DWARF'S STROKE.

As stated, it was quite dark when the Wyandots reached the ferry. The creek, broad and deep, could not be forded by wading, and skillful swimmers as were the Indians, they were not inclined to take to the water.

There was at their disposal only the single small canoe in which Gray Wolf had paddled across, and this was intended to carry but two persons, so that it could hardly be used for more.

But there was a "warrior-canoe" waiting on the opposite side, and after a few minutes' halt upon the part of the Wyandots, one of the red-skins sprung into the small one and shot swiftly across the creek.

As may be supposed, Duke White and his companions were watching all these movements with eager intensity. The ranger understood what it all meant, and was thus enabled to keep in check the fiery impatience of Chapman.

The Indian was gone but a few minutes, when he was seen returning with a larger canoe in tow, one that was sufficient to carry the whole party. With the two, he lightly touched the bank where his party were awaiting him.

Gray Wolf stood motionless until every warrior had seated himself. Lizzie Rushton had tremblingly awaited orders as to what she should do, and receiving none, started toward the larger boat. As she did so Gray Wolf caught her arm and held her motionless, while at the same moment the larger boat shoved away.

This left our heroine with the detested chief, and she felt as though she would like to die at that moment.

"Where is George?" she asked herself, with a great sigh. "Have I no earthly friends to care for me?"

Gray Wolf motioned for her to enter his canoe, and she did not dare refuse. She stepped hastily in and took her seat near the prow, so as to be as far away from her abominable captor as possible.

As she sat there, looking down at the dark, swiftly-flowing stream, she felt how grateful would be her cool embrace to her fevered frame; but she was a conscientious girl, who, however much she might sigh for death, could not allow herself voluntarily to seek it.

Immediately after her stepped Gray Wolf, seating himself in the stern, seizing the single paddle with which to propel the boat. As he moved out from the shore, neither he nor Lizzie noticed a dark, ball-like object that floated swiftly down-stream in the darkness, toward the canoe, and when it reached its stern, disappeared. They did not see it, and yet it concerned them both very greatly.

At this time the large canoe was quite a distance out in the stream, steadily moving toward the other shore; but Gray Wolf felt no special need of hurry. He admired the handsome pale-face in his power, and was disposed to make the most possible of this all too brief ride.

Lizzie could feel that his dark, evil eyes were fixed upon her, and she carefully avoided encountering them by steadily looking out over the dark stream. She felt indeed as though the creek was her "Rubicon." Once across that, and there would be no return for her.

Gray Wolf dipped his paddle and leisurely pursued his way; but leisurely as it was, it occurred to him that there was a tardiness in the canoe's movements for which he was not responsible. He had paddled it so frequently that he was pretty thoroughly acquainted with its capabilities, and he was sure there was something the matter with it.

Had he been alone, very likely he would have made an examination; but he was too much engaged in the contemplation of the pale-faced beauty before him to care anything for that which did not imperatively claim his attention.

Lizzie Rushton sat, the personification of despair. With every stroke of the oar, it seemed her heart was beaten down—down—down, until she was certain she would die. "God will protect me," she murmured; "but where is George? Has he not heard of my woe? My poor mother! her heart must be broken! Have I no human friends who care for me? Am I left alone?"

The curious tardiness of the canoe became more marked. It was as if it was dragging some heavy dead weight behind it.

Still Gray Wolf paddled leisurely forward, although he began to feel some annoyance at the unaccountable action of his boat; but so long as it continued progressing, even at such a slow rate, he was satisfied to sit still and feed his evil eyes upon his helpless captive.

All at once, when he dipped his paddle into the water it staid there!

Something had caught it fast, and he could not move it. He pulled quite powerfully once or twice, but it remained as immovable as if seized in the jaws of a shark.

With a natural thrill of alarm, he leaped over the edge of the canoe and looked into the water. As he did so, a dark hand shot upward, and a knife was buried in his heart!

With an awful groan he threw himself backward, and before the appalled Lizzie Rushton had an idea of what was the matter, the dwarfed form of Pee Wit came up out of the water and so skillfully vaulted into the canoe that there was scarcely any shock to its equilibrium; but her nerves were so shocked at the certainty that something dreadful had taken place, that she gave utterance to a scream of terror.

Pee Wit raised his hand as a warning to keep still.

"Sh! no noise!" he whispered. "Pee Wit here! he friend—he take care of pale-face—make no noise—all right!"

Lizzie Rushton identified the friendly Indian before he spoke, but she had already uttered her scream of terror, and it had attracted the notice of the Wyandots in the further boat. There was something in the sound of the outcry which aroused their suspicions, and they ceased paddling as if uncertain what it meant, but with the intention of fathoming the mystery.

Here was a dilemma for Pee Wit, for it showed the imminent probability of his being detected. He did not dare change the course of the canoe, for that would arouse suspicion at once; and as he was near the center of the stream, the Wyandots were certain to overhaul him before he could reach shore with his companion.

It therefore only remained for him to continue paddling toward the red-skins ahead until they were thrown off their guard, when he could manage to get beyond their reach without attracting notice, and this was scarcely less dangerous than to turn and run; for the physical contour of Pee Wit was such as to make it impossible for him to personate such an athletic

warrior as Gray Wolf with any possibility of success, when he was not concealed from view by darkness.

The Wyandot chief was stone-dead, and the light canoe was loaded almost to its gunwales. Pee Wit had taken his seat directly in front of the body, not daring to throw it overboard, while the attention of the other boat was drawn toward him.

The Indian dallied with the paddle, drifting further and further down-stream, and with his eye intently fixed on the larger canoe, the outlines of which could be distinctly seen in the dim starlight.

The captive, in whose breast despair had so suddenly given way to hope, was far more apprehensive and excited than was her dusky friend.

She peered out in the darkness, straining her vision toward the Wyandot canoe, her heart throbbing violently at the thought that her fate was so soon to be decided.

"Oh!" she whispered, in the passionate undertone of terror, "they are coming back again!"

Such was the case, and Pee Wit felt more alarm than he was willing to confess; but, with the cunning of his race, he had made preparations for this exigency, knowing that it was very likely to occur at any moment. He had dallied with the paddle in such a manner that, while he had advanced scarcely a foot, yet he had drifted a dozen yards down-stream.

This had been of some advantage; but, as the Wyandots had done nearly precisely the same thing, the advantage, after all, was scarcely appreciable.

It would not do to hesitate any longer, and turning quickly about, Pee Wit began paddling rapidly for the shore he had left, while the Wyandots, now fully satisfied that something was wrong, followed with nearly double his speed!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DASH FOR LIFE.

It had been the intention of the friendly Indian to dally along with his paddle until the Wyandots had landed, and then, by making as if he were going to touch shore below them, he could get out of their sight, and then very easily effect his escape.

But that single outcry of the appalled captive had reached their ears and aroused their suspicions; the continued hesitation of the canoe made it seem as if something was wrong, and this, taken with the fact that they knew a pursuit had been attempted, caused them to turn about to assure themselves that every thing was right.

Great as was the necessity for haste, Pee Wit had made but one or two sweeps of his paddle, when he laid it down again, and catching the dead body of Gray Wolf in his arms, threw it overboard. It had scarcely struck the water with its loud splash, when he was seated and swinging his paddle again.

This fleeing away of the canoe before the pursuing Wyandots left no doubt in their minds of foul play, and putting forth their energies, their long canoe, under its prodigious propulsion, shot forward with the speed of the swallow.

The fugitive left no effort untried to escape. Feeling his desperate straits, he uttered a peculiar cry well understood by his friend, Duke, and headed straight for the shore, where he knew they were awaiting him.

The race was necessarily short, but the advantage was immensely on the side of the pursuing Wyandots, who overhauled Pee Wit with amazing rapidity. If he was anxious, how was it with the captive, Lizzie Rushton?

Her feelings were wrought up to the highest pitch. She had been lifted from the very depths of despair to the highest pinnacle of hope, and now she was vibrating between the two.

The arms of the dusky dwarf went like the piston-rods of an engine, but still she saw he was losing ground from the start. She leaned forward, as if by the movement she could slightly assist her friend, and she wondered why their progress was so extraordinarily slow.

The Wyandots never paused. Less than a hundred feet separated them from their prey, and they gave utterance to more than one triumphant yell at the certainty of securing it.

Lizzie looked at the shore, "so near, and yet so far"—then at the dark boat coming down like a race-horse upon them, and then she sunk back in her seat, and covered her face with her hands.

"All is lost—all is lost!"

"Get ready to jump," said Pee Wit, who had observed the movement of despair; "touch shore—den jump."

His intention was to run the canoe full speed against the bank, and Lizzie leaping out at the same instant. His exclamation gave her an idea of what was meant, and she roused herself again.

The speed and relative position of the two boats showed that they would both strike the shore at about the same instant, so that there was not much prospect of our friends getting the start after all.

At this instant, when the feelings of all parties were wrought up to the highest pitch, the sharp crack of two rifles broke the stillness, and the two Wyandots in the front of the boat sprung up with a shriek, and throwing their hands aloft, tumbled overboard.

"Back, ye consarned varmints!" shouted Duke White, "or we'll make you smell more thunder and lightning!"

This demonstration was so unexpected

that the Wyandots were thrown into confusion. It had very much the appearance to them of an ambush, and the survivors, the instant they recovered from their amazement, shot their canoe backward, so as to be beyond what other rifles were ready for them.

Lizzie Rushton obeyed the directions of Pee Wit implicitly. She did not wait for the prow to touch the bank, but the very instant she was certain she could clear the intervening distance, she made the leap.

Aided by the momentum of the boat, and the energy of her own youthful limbs, she more than accomplished the feat, and landed high and dry upon the bank, where she felt herself instantly seized again.

"Oh, heavens! I am I captured again?" she wailed, believing all was lost.

"Yes; captured again!" exclaimed a joyous voice, and she was embraced and kissed again and again by her half-frantic captor.

"Is this the way you receive me?" asked Chapman, as he pressed her to his heart; "don't you consider me any better than an Indian, Lizzie—my dearest—my own?"

"Oh, George!"

It was all she could murmur, when she fainted dead outright in the arms of her lover. In the mean time, the cool-headed ranger was attending to other perhaps more important matters. He saw that the Wyandots had not made a full retreat, but had only withdrawn beyond what seemed the great immediate danger.

When they had been given time to recall that only two guns had been fired into them, they would know that that was all there was to be turned against them; for no party, after getting their enemies head and ears into ambush, would fail to take the utmost advantage possible of it, and inflict all the damage in their power before the enemy could gain time to withdraw.

And the lesson of this was that, interesting as was the situation of Lizzie Rushton, swooning and insensible in the arms of her lover, it still endangered her own and the safety of all concerned, and the imperative duty of the scout was to start their flight toward the settlement at once.

"Come, enp, ye must fetch the gal to powerful quick, for it's more nor likely that them varmints 'll be back hyar afore long."

But Lizzie was not the girl to give way long to any such weakness. The sufferings which she had undergone were enough to try the nerves of the strongest man. She quickly rallied and looked about her in some confusion. Then, as she realized her situation, she murmured, in the low, sweet tones of love:

"Forgive me for thinking you would not come!"

"Heaven bless you," replied our hero, as he pressed the dear girl close to him. "But we are not out of danger yet; we must not tarry here."

"Who are with you?" asked Lizzie, looking about her.

"The Red Dwarf and Duke, and—I like to have forgotten—'Lije Lamb!"

"What! he? What brought him so far?"

"He has come to rescue you," laughed Chapman.

"Can it be possible? Where is he?"

"He went further down the creek; he said he wanted to get a better crack at the varmints," replied the ranger; "but I haven't heard his gun bark yet," he added.

"Perhaps he has crossed over to capture the whole party of Wyandots," said Chapman.

"It was he who deserted mother and I," said Lizzie Rushton, with the utmost indignation; "if he had remained with us, as any man would have done, this never could have happened."

"Never mind, dearest," whispered Chapman, as he drew her arm within his own; "it is all for the best, and the Indians shall never lay hands upon you again, shall I live to defend you?"

"I don't know 'bout that," put in Duke; "the varmints may nab us all up if we stay hyar much longer."

"Where's Pee Wit?" asked Chapman, as he looked about and failed to see the friendly Indian.

"He's down by the water, watchin' the varmints. I s'posed ye youngsters would take a little time to blubber, so I sent him thar to make sure the skunks didn't git ahead of us."

"Why, haven't they been punished enough, without seeking for more?" asked the lover, in no little astonishment.

"That ain't 'zactly what they're lookin' fur, but it's red-skin natur' if it gits a trick sarved on it to try and git even ag'in, and that's what they're up to."

"If that's the case—"

"Yere's Pee Wit."

The Indian made his appearance as the words were uttered, and at the same instant he announced that the Wyandot canoe was returning, its inmates evidently in search of those who had so hardly used them.

(Concluded next week.)

ANOTHER "WELCOME GUEST!"

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Camp-Fire Yarns.

BY CAPTAIN MAYNE REID.

The Buffalo Decoy.

AN ODD INCIDENT OF THE PRAIRIES.

"Once on a time," said an old trapper, who was entertaining our camp with his prairie experiences, "I tuk it inter my head to play bufler-cow, an' thet air counterfeet kim nigh costin' me my life. The thing war this: I war out upon the prairie, on a fork o' the Platte, whar me an' Ed Kunkle war trappin' beaver. We'd got out o' meat, for the bufler war sca'ce, an' not only sca'ce but shy as big-horns. They'd been made so by the Pawnee Indians, who'd jest finished up a grand hunt all over thet deestrick o' country, an' skeert the critters everywhar. The buflers hed got so cunnin' thet thar wa'n't no chance o' approachin' 'em in the usooal way; so Ed an' me see'd we must eyther hit on some plan o' circumventin' 'em, or sturve; for the deer an' prong-horns war jest as bad skeert as the bufls; an' for over a week we ked git nuthin' to eat but parsnip-dog—havin' trapped neery beaver in all thet time.

"What air to be d'ed?" says Ed.

"We must think," says I.

"So we both tuk to thinkin'; an' jest as we war in the thick o' it, what shed loom up in sight but a gang o' bufler over a hundred strong. They war still far off over the prairie, but we ked tell they war a-makin' torst us, though kummin' on slow, an' browsin' on the short grass as they moved forrard.

"I hev it," said I. "This chile an' boun' to get 'thun shootin' distance o' them buflers, an' ekivilly boun' to throw one o' 'em in its tracks; so keep up y'ur sperrits, Ed; we'll hev hump-ribs for our dinner, an' tongue to foller."

"How'll ye git at 'em?" asked Ed, supposin' they'd skeer off, as others hed done, 'thout g'ein' us the chance o' a shot. An' so I'd a-thort myself, but for the idee thet hed kim inter my mind. It war this:

"Bout two weeks afore, we'd killed a bufler cow; an' thar war the skin in our tent. It war in good condishun, for I wanted it for a purpuss, an' hed thurfor been keorful in peelin' it off the cow's karkiss. Soon as Ed see'd me take up the pelt, he understood jest what I war drivin' at, an' gin' me his help.

"In less'n ten minutes arter, I war stetched up in thet skin, thet kivered me from head to fut, an' so like a two-yr-old bufler-cow, thet it 'ud 'a' puzzled one o' thar own kin to 'a' told the differ. An' it did puzzle 'em, the bufl gang, bulls, cows, an' all; for in a half an hour arter, when I hed laid myself in thar track, a good bit out on the prairie, they kep on torst me, 'thout showin' any sign o' skear. Contrarywise, they kim on out o' a sort o' kewiosity, scintin' an' sniffin' as they crowded forrard.

"I hedn't time to single out one o' 'em for a shot afore they war clost up, an' a'most round me. Then, pickin' out a cow thet 'pear'd the biggest an' fattest, I drawed trigger, an' down tumbled cow in her tracks. In course I expected the rest to take to thar heels on hearin' the shot; but in thet I war disappointed, an', as it soon turned out, in the most unpleasantest fashion. Instead o' runnin' off, the gang clost right round me, in a sort o' circle, the bulls on the inside o' 'em. An' o' all the snortin', an' bellerin', an' stampin' o' the groun', an' 'tarin' up the dirt, this chile iver see'd done by bufler, thet war the biggest exhibishun o' it. They kim so clost, I ked feel the hot steam shootin' out o' thar red nostrils, an' smell thar breath, w' the scent o' the parsnip-grass fresh upon 't. Thar war a score pair o' eyes flashin' aroun' me, as ef they war on fire; an' a score pair o' threatenin' horns 'thun less'n ten feet o' my precious karkiss.

"Thar ain't no needcessity for my tellin' you I war skeart, an' bad skeart, at that. I didn't think any longer o' counterfeitin' a bufler-cow, an' 'ud 'a' throwed off the disguise instantur ef I ked 'a' dud so. But, Ed hed saved the hide so fast round me, arms an' all, thet I mout as well 'a' tried to jump out o' my ownskin. What I did do, war to spring up from all-fours, an' stan' straight as a post, swingin' my empty rifle aroun' me!

"At this, the buflers 'peared taken a leetle aback, though they didn't all at once retract, but stud thar groun', a sort o' a half-threatenin' an' half-surprised. I reck'n they must still a thort me a cow thet hed reared up on her hind-legs.

"Wal, I ain't sure yit what 'ud 'a' been the upshot o' thet ere delemma, an' whither it wudn't 'a' ended in the bulls gorin' me down, an' makin' mince-meat o' me, w' thar hooves, ef I hedn't thort o' a way to git shet o' them. It wa'n't much o' a think—only a sort o' instinct o' self-preservation. I hed brought out w' me a big hoss-pistol, thet Ed hed bought from one o' the dragons at Laramie's Fort, an' thet which, when fired, give a crack most like a cannon. It war stuck inter the seam o' the cow-skin, jest behind my back, for, as you know, we strips bufler by slicin' thar hides thet way. I gripped back, an' got holt o' the hoss-pistol, an' 'thout losin' a second o' time let fly in the face o' a big bull thet war behavin' the most obstreperous o' the gang. I don't suppose the ball did him any harm; but the crack skeart him, altho w' the flash, as it did all the t'others; an' turnin' tail, away they went, tails up, lumberin' over the prairie!

"This chile kin say thet in all his parsnip-experience, he never see'd the hind-quarters o' bufler w' more rejoicin' than them. Fact is, I foud jest like a man do who hez been suddenly delivered from the jaws o' sartin death.

"Wal, I thort it war all over; but wa'n't I mistook? The bufler war gone, an' for good. Thar ked be no doubt bout thet. The cow I'd throwed her; an' I war now congratulatin' myself on the fine feedin' Ed an' I 'ud hev, arter our long spell o' short comin'. But jest as I turned round to go torst the karkiss, I see'd thet it wa'n't sca'ce visible. It war surrounded by a crowd o' wolves. Not the small, sneakin' coyotes, but the biggest kind o' bufler wolves! Thar war at least twenty o' 'em, o' all colors—black, white, brown an' gray. They hed jest jumped the dead cow, an' war already 'tarin' at her hide.

"My first thort war to run up an' drive 'em away, an' this war what I did, or rayther tried to do. But, though they made a bit o' a scatter when I charged among 'em, it war only for a yard or so; an' then they all turned upon me an' made sign to attack fiercer than hed the bufler-bulls. They, too, tuk me for a cow!

"The varmints war no doubt hungry, too, an' angered at bein' druv from the fine feast they hed made beginnin' o', so thet, whither I mout be biped or quadroped, they war determined on disputin' my right.

"I hed no arms, now, 'ceptin' the empty gun an' pistol; an' w' the gun grasped by the barrel, I laid round me. This kep them bayed a bit; but I'm sartin sure it w'udn't 'a' answered for long. They war the fiercest an' famishedest pack this chile iver see'd in the hul course o' his huntin', an' he don't want never more to meet thet like o' them ag'in. Ef I'd been alone, thar an' then, they'd 'a' made wolf-meat o' me sure; an' my bones 'ud 'a' been left to bleach on the prairie, aside the skeleton o' thet bufler-cow, an' some traveler, seein' the two skins, must 'a' supposed a couple o' cows hed gone under—ha-ha-ha!

"Wal, I wa'n't alone, as ye know. Ed Kunkle war w' me, nigh by, a-watchin' the hul thing; an' jest 'bout the time the wolves were beginnin' to snap thar teeth clost to my shins, Ed put in a appearance, runnin' over the prairie, an' shoutin' like duration. As soon as they 'spied him, 'bout whose edentity thar ked be no doubt—for he stud six fut three in his moccasins—the wolves, too, made a scatter, an' left the disputed karkiss to myself an' my trappin' partner.

"We hed a good lart at the hul thing, as we sat thet night by our camp-fire, polishin' off the roast ribs! But I swore then I'd never play bufler-cow ag'in, nor sail under false colors o' any kind; an' I've kep my oath."

Cruiser Crusoe:

LIFE ON A TROPIC ISLE.

BY LAFAYETTE LAFORREST.

NUMBER TEN.

DETERMINED to tame the zebra, my constant practice was to stand beside it while it was eating, and stroke its neck, play with its ears, in every way making friendly manifestations. As I did so, it seemed strange to me that an animal so much like the common ass, only taller, and with more beautiful skin, should be so exceedingly fierce, while the other was the meekest of beasts of burden. But, then, the wild ass is as savage as any.

The zebra would glare at me, curl her lip from off her teeth, snarl, and even, despite her muzzle, try to bite.

I was indeed sorely puzzled how to act, as not even the presence of her young would restrain her from flight if I let her loose.



One morning, our breakfast being scanty, I thought I would scour the neighborhood in search of extra provisions, such as fruit, a nut or two, and perhaps a land tortoise or so.

With this view I advanced toward a row of cotton-trees, when I heard a roar, which I believed to come from some lion, and which made my dog, as if frightened, slink behind me with tail drooping low.

Not hearing the cry repeated, however, and thinking that perhaps I had been mistaken, I crept through the low jungle, keeping my dog down, until I advanced about a hundred feet, when up jumped a covey of ostriches, two old ones and a young one. It then occurred to me that I had heard the singular fact stated, that though the lion's voice seems to come deeper from the chest than that of the ostrich, it is impossible, at a moderate distance, to tell one from the other.

Away went my dog, sending the whole brood rushing over the prairie. When alarmed, these creatures take strides of twelve or fourteen feet. In fact, their speed is by naturalists calculated at twenty-six miles an hour. The only means by which they are shot is by being intercepted by the hunters, who are well aware that they never serve from a course once taken.

But in this instance there was another thing in my favor.

The ostrich, contrary to popular theory, is extremely fond of the young. When, therefore, the covey brood, a larger than bantam cocks, took to their heels, the female led the way, while the male hung behind to protect the rear.

The dog was with difficulty called away from the chicks, until the cock attacked it furiously, fighting with great desperation.

The young ones were not very easy to catch, but at length I succeeded in capturing quite a number, which I tied two by two by the legs. When my task was completed, I was compelled, to my great regret, to shoot the mother, which attacked me. It was between seven and eight feet high, and I have no doubt weighed nearly two hundred weight.

But how was all this prey to be taken to the camp. Fortunately I always had with me a ball of twine, one of several balls procured from the wreck. With this I tied the feet of the juvenile ostriches, which naturally ran very quickly, so close together that they could only waddle, and in this way, the dog and I drove them into my "camp." I was proud of my capture, as I knew that the

creatures would thrive, while by judicious clipping of their wings and of a particular tendon in each leg, they would be unable to get away.

The first egg I obtained I found delicious. The ostrich lays its eggs in simple hollows in the ground, usually in sandy places, not more than a few inches deep. It lays about twenty.

Its food consists of pods, seeds, and the top buds and leaves of several plants. The male bird is of a glossy jet black, with the exception of a few white feathers, which form an article of trade.

These creatures collect in troops, and will associate with the zebra, the spring-bok, and the gnou, but never with birds. It was with no small pride that I reviewed my flock as they were driven forward that day. The cave reached, a rude pen was easily constructed into which they were placed, with such food as the neighborhood afforded, and there left.

I now made a journey to my cave, whence I intended to convey a quantity of necessaries to my summer-house, where I intended to remain a long time.

Accordingly Tiger was harnessed to my clumsy cart (the box), which was loaded with such things as I most needed, after which we started.

On the way I beheld for the first time a number of cicadi and locusts, especially in sandy spots, which were thinly covered with grass. The presence of locusts alarmed me, as I knew that the fearful swarms, the horrid clouds of these creatures mentioned in history as astonishing and frightening mankind at remote intervals, all took their flight from the continent near which was my island.

I was also displeased with the ants, I saw at intervals. I knew the danger, those of Africa being a numerous species, which, like the Destroying Angel, walk steadily forward in the path ordained them, sparing neither magnitude nor beauty, neither the living nor the dead. One species which seems at times to have no fixed habitation, ranges about in vast armies, and being furnished with very strong jaws, can attack whatever animal impedes their progress.

Avoiding these dangerous pests, as best I could, I finally shot a spring-bok, fed my dog, and enjoyed a broil in a lonely spot I had selected for a halting-place.

Seated with my dog at my feet, the animal asleep with one eye open, and with a cockatoo and bird of paradise perched on a neighboring bush, I can not say that I was

happy, and soon began to prefer grass and herbs to its mother's milk. Still it was not quite old enough to be weaned.

I was in a hurry to make use of the old zebra, that I might perform my journeys more easily. This led me to try an experiment.

One morning I commenced the work. In the first place the zebra was tied more tightly than before, and its muzzle drawn so firmly that it could not breathe except through its nostrils. Then, by means of my lasso, I threw it to the ground.

I had manufactured a rough kind of saddle, which, in spite of the creature's resistance, I passed round its body.

I had seen oxen saddled to be ridden and had witnessed a struggle on their part, but it was as nothing to the untamed zebra of the island.

Quickly upon the creature's back I lashed Tiger; then, having secured a strong and lengthy rope around the zebra's neck, I set it at liberty. For full two hours the animal, feeling its unconscious burden, which would bark and yell fiercely, careered hither and thither, plunging, reeling, rolling upon its side, but all to no purpose. Finding its efforts vain, it gradually became more quiet, when I led it back into its stable, and gave it not only a feed of nice fresh meat, but of corn and barley, to which, after some general show of repugnance, it took kindly.

Here was indeed a triumph on which I gloried myself with some show of reason. I was indeed delighted, and anticipated many a wild gallop over the island until what I ever hoped for should take place: my being picked up by some passing craft.

One hot day, at about noon, I was comfortably reclined in my hammock, which swung in the summer-house. Close at hand was a shelf on which rested my flint and steel with other useful articles; again within reach was a large calabash full of water; beside this was a bench and a rough table; then above this were two more shelves.

Beneath me was my dog, anxiously looking up for a chance morsel or a bone, which I verily believe this animal likes better than to be fed in the ordinary way.

Lord and monarch of "all I surveyed," I was on this occasion particularly happy.

Lazily swinging to and fro in my hammock, a drowsiness stole over me, when, dropping to sleep, I had a dream.

It seemed to me that there I was still in my bower, for I could see my dog reclining fast asleep at one side of my hut. Nature itself seemed in a doze, for not a blade of

"OWED" TO THE FIRST FLY OF THE SEASON.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

Oh little fly that on my pane,
This morning I see creeping,
Right glad I welcome you again,
After your winter's sleeping!

The little song you gayly sing,
Is full of rhyme and reason,
Because its music has a hint
Of summer's coming season.

The spring, as yet, is cool and chill,
And frost is hardly over,
I fear some cold snap yet may kill
You—darling little rover!

You find me changed? Well, so it goes,
I often tried to lame you,
Last year while walking on my nose,
But now, I can not blame you.

To-day the spider weaves his web,
I see him slyly watch you,
Be careful, or he'll give a grab,
And in short order catch you.

And yet, who knows?—you may yet swim
A dead corpse in our glasses,
Or reaching too far o'er the brim,
Stick fast in the molasses.

Or I may find you in a pie—
A sight to make me pallid!
Unable even to sing or cry,
Like blackbirds in the ballad.

You may be scalded in my tea,
Ere I have chance to save you,
Or sepulchered between the tarts,
Or smothered in the gravy.

Or, who can say but that I might,
While I am widely yawning,
Gobble you in and swallow you,
Ere I could give you warning?

And since I have come to think,
With life I dare not trust you,
Because you'll run such awful risks,
And so, I guess I'll treat you!

Beat Time's Notes.

MEN OF MARK.

"There's a destiny that shapes our beginnings."

PROMINENT among the men of mark, is our friend, A. B. Seedy, Jr., whose present position challenges the admiration of the world.

At school his dullness was of the very highest order, notwithstanding his teacher often gave him sharp cuts. He was the tallest boy in the school, but the lowest in his class. His appetite was much larger than his body, and the teacher frequently said he would much rather board a thrashing-machine.

Every minute when he had nothing to do he was doing nothing, and so had he improved his time that when the three months' term was out, he had completely mastered the fly-leaves of his arithmetic, and was perfectly familiar with the back of his grammar—although at this time he showed but little sign of the greatness which afterward distinguished other men from him, when he had grown up. Instead of being a High School Boy, he was characterized as a high old scholar in the fullest sense of the school term.

In truth, people even went so far as to say he was a remarkably perfect fool; but he did not believe a word of it. How little do people of the present century appreciate genius in the pod! But genius will always spring up like a toad-stool in the night.

When he left school, he had a very large amount of learning under his arm, and from that day he was successful in every thing he accomplished, and to-day this poor boy, whom everybody laughed at and derided—this boy who had the wide future before him, and the past behind him—is far up the path of Fame—which in this case means the tow-path, as he drives for a canal-boat, and it may be added, is very near the end of his rope.

Get out of debt, if it takes the last cent that you can borrow to do it.

I would like to know if a round steak is included in a square meal?

We always have bad weather at Easter. I've noticed it a hundred times.

We are judged, not so much by what we do as by what we make people think we do. If we were judged by what we do, character would fall fifty cents on the dollar, or I lie again.

Joak of Arc must not be confounded with Noah of Ark.

SOME men make a good deal of noise in the world. The noisiest animal is of the long-eared kind, but I allude to no inferences.

To speak of bugs which are mere creations of the brain, our space will not allow. The lightning-bug, or, as it is familiarly called in colored poetry, the June-bug, is a most enlightened bug, and carries its lantern aft. If you know what it is good for, then you know more than I do.

Motors are always around on warm and suffocating nights, when there's a light in the window for them. They have a burning desire to get into the candle-flame, but not half enough of them get there.

They flip their floury wings in your face while you sweat over a sonnet to your love's No. 1 shoes, and then you wish you were where moth doth not corrupt.

How do the little dizzy bee improve each shining hour.

The bee lives a kind of hum-drum life, gathering basketsful of beeswax. Barefooted boys use them to step on in the grass—they learn them to jump.

I wouldn't give a cent for a pocketful of bees. They point the moral that there is no sweet without a sting. I saw one gathering honey from some artificial flowers on a lady's bonnet the other day. I suppose he was satisfied with all he found there.

Bees live in hives. I had hives when I was a boy. Now I'll let this bee go.

This next mite society, we are informed, will be held in an old cheese—everybody is desired to attend. If you can't bring a widow, bring a widow's mite.

A LADY friend of ours is about to marry the man who made her husband's tombstone. We think he did a favor which deserves such a reward.

To pride one's self upon his blood is one of the worst species of vein-glory we know of.

If your boots are too long, you can reduce them to the right size by cutting them off at the toes with a hatchet.

SOME poet's rhymes are pretty badly tangled in the poetical feet.

A WOMAN with a temper as fine as a Toledo blade—not to be broken—is not a very cheerful piece of furniture to have in a small family.

As over, BEAT TIME.